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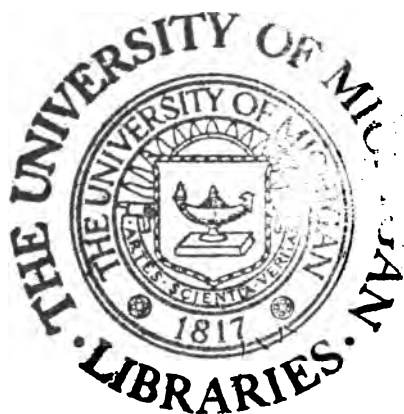
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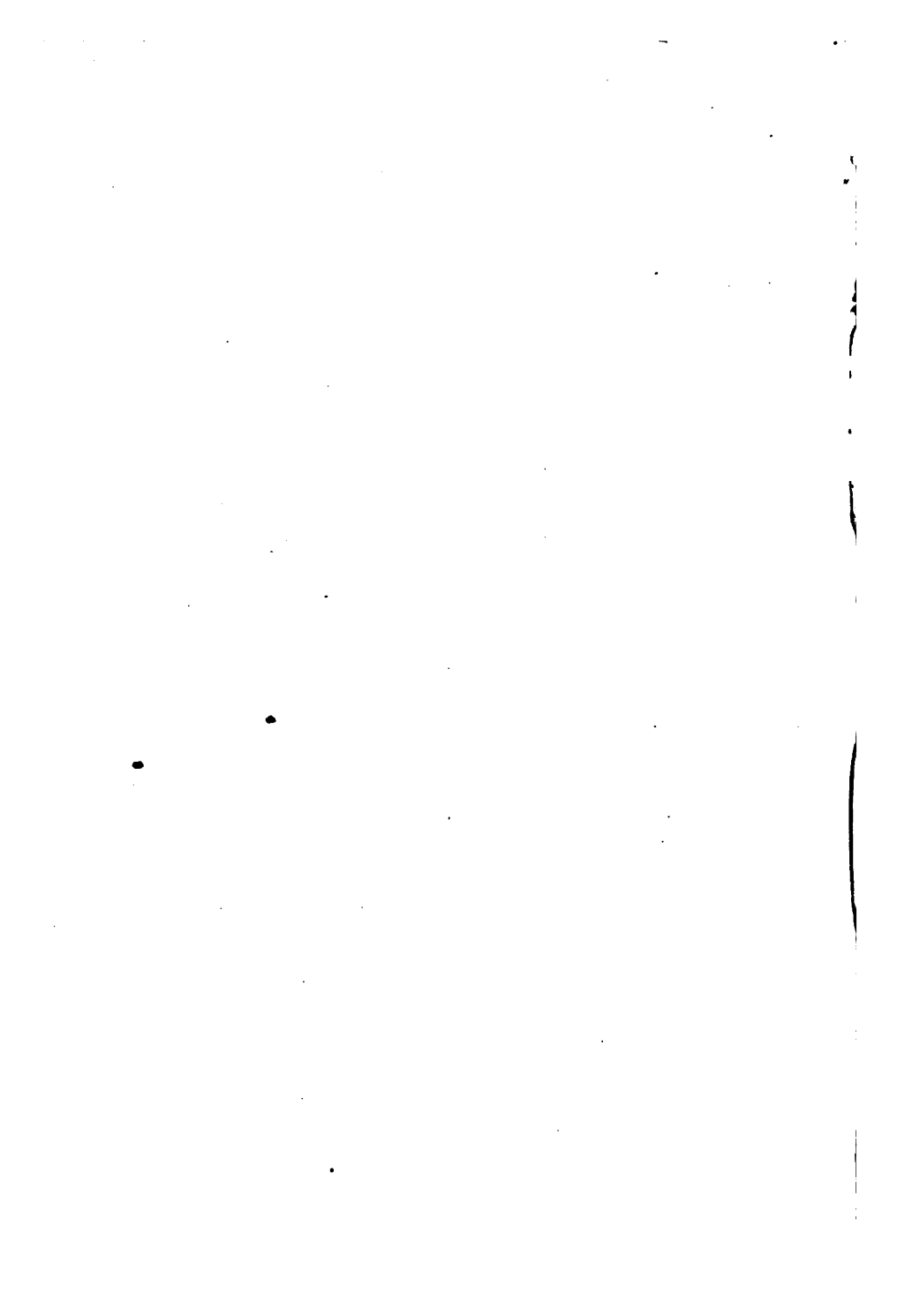


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THE INDIAN MIRROR.



J. Hay
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DEVOUT PRACTICES IN PUBLIC.

THE
INDIAN MIRROR;

OR,

Illustrations of Bible Truth
DRAWN FROM LIFE IN INDIA.



LONDON: THOMAS NELSON AND SONS,
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1878.

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I

Women at the Mill.

IN the East grinding is considered as peculiarly a woman's work. In view of this fact, Jeremiah makes it part of his doleful lament over Jerusalem, that "they took the young men to grind" (Lam. v. 13 ; Judges xvi. 21).

Job, although an emir, and "the greatest man of all the East," speaks of his wife as herself employed in grinding ; and such is the custom in many parts of the East. The earlier Bible narratives furnish frequent instances of the wives and daughters of even great and wealthy men engaged in what we should consider menial pursuits. Thus Sarah is referred to as baking the cakes for the strangers who visit Abraham ; Rebekah is met at the well, whither she had gone to draw water ; and Rachel and the daughters of Jethro are mentioned as tending their fathers' flocks. The same state of things is found in many parts of India.

Speaking of Central India, Captain Tone says : " The

Mahrattas are, as a people, engaged in occupations partly rural. To this cause, perhaps, may be ascribed that great simplicity of manners which distinguishes the Mahratta people. Homer mentions princesses going in person to the fountains to wash their household linen. I can affirm having seen the daughter of a prince able to bring an army into the field much larger than the whole Greek confederacy, making bread with her own hands, and otherwise employed in the ordinary business of domestic housewifery."

It is not customary, however, for women, unless of the humblest class, to grind other than the corn or rice required for their own household. Accordingly, when the Egyptians are referred to inclusively, from the highest to the lowest condition, it is said, "From the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill" (Ex. xi. 5).

In like manner, when Babylon is to be humbled because of her pride and her other sins, the prophet thus addresses to her God's judgment: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the mill-stones, and grind meal" (Isa. xlvii. 1, 2).

Throughout India and a great part of the East it is the custom to grind the corn or rice daily. This is done by the women, who commence their work generally at the dawn of morning, and use as their mill two flat



WOMEN GRINDING.

circular stones, from fifteen to eighteen inches or two feet in diameter, and about half a foot in thickness. The lower stone is often fixed to the ground, and has a

little peg rising from its centre, round which the upper stone works. There are two holes in the upper mill-stone—one in the centre, which receives the upright peg of the lower stone, whilst into the other hole in the upper stone the corn or rice is poured to be ground. The flour works out from between the edges of the mill-stones, and falls into a trough, or upon a mat placed to receive it. In working the mill, the women sit on the ground, with the stones also on the ground before them, and they turn the upper stone round by means of an upright peg fixed near its edge. In India it is very frequently one person only who works the mill; but sometimes two women work the same mill together, and in that case they both have hold of the handle at one time, the mill being placed between them.

In order to show the very sudden and unexpected manner of "the coming of the Son of man," our Lord refers to this very custom. "Two women," says he, "shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matt. xxiv. 41). Not only is his advent to be unexpected as to the time at which it shall occur, but no one can tell how it shall affect himself personally. It will sever those working together in the very closest association; for "the one shall be taken, and the other left," whilst both alike are busied in the same daily calling.

From what has been stated in regard to the daily grinding of the corn, it will be evident how merciful, and at the same time how necessary, was that enactment of

the Mosaic law : " No man shall take the nether or the upper mill-stone to pledge " (Deut. xxiv. 6). Since each family was accustomed to grind at one time only meal enough for the day's use, and as every family did this for itself apart, it is evident at once that, to take the family mill-stone as a pledge, was in fact to take the bread out of their mouths ; and accordingly, this is the reason added to the enactment just quoted : " For," by so doing, " he taketh a man's life to pledge."

Travellers in India are accustomed to rise very early in the morning, often a great while before day, to prosecute their journey in the cool morning hours, as very shortly after the sun is up the heat compels them to halt. If such travellers happen to pass through or near a village just before daybreak, their ears are generally greeted with the pleasant sound of the mill-stones, giving evidence that the careful housewife is already up, and busy in providing for the wants of the day ; whilst it further awakens in them grateful anticipations of their own approaching rest and refreshment. In the towns, likewise, the working of the mill-stones forms a pleasant sound as it reaches the ear in the still morning hours.

This circumstance is several times alluded to in the Scriptures. When the Lord, by the prophet Jeremiah, threatens the Jews with the loss of all their pleasant things because of their wickedness, " the sound of the mill-stones " is included in the catalogue. " Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice

of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the mill-stones, and the light of the candle" (Jer. xxv. 10). And one of the prophetic foreshadowings of the utter desolation in store for the great mystical Babylon spoken of in the Revelation, is intimated in the same terms: "And the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee" (Rev. xviii. 22).





II.

Burning Incense unto the Drag.

THE prophet Habakkuk, in announcing the judgments which were to fall upon the people because of their impiety, and speaking on behalf of Jehovah, says : “ Lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that are not theirs ” (Hab. i. 6). This Chaldean nation, it is further declared, shall become puffed up by its success, “ and offend, imputing this his power unto his god.” And so confident do they become of their own superiority and power, that they are represented as treating “ men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them.” Accordingly, “ they take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag ; ” and then, boasting themselves in their exploits, “ they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag ; because by them

their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous" (Hab. i. 14-16).

Now, the latter part of this quotation, in which the wicked in their prosperity are said actually to worship the instruments of their success, must not be taken as figurative, meaning only that mentally they worship them, by trusting and rejoicing in these things, as if they were the real and ultimate means of producing their prosperity. In this merely figurative sense the words are only too expressive of the conduct and temper of thousands of persons, even in our own time and country, who still "sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, because by them their portion is fat and their meat plenteous." In a figurative sense as it respects outward acts, although really and truly as it regards their state of mind, they worship their "ledger," and their "shares," and their lucrative "investments;" they make a shrine of their "office" or their "counting-house," and there pay homage to "gold" as their god.

But the adoration rendered by the persons to whom the words of the prophet originally applied was a less secret worship than this, and in fact consisted, without doubt, of a literal prostration before the very instruments of their success. Such practices, besotted and degrading as they appear to us, not only existed in the East in ancient times, but are found in full force at the present day. In India the workman is seen actually offering sacrifice to his tools, and falling down before them in



OFFERING SACRIFICE.

worship. The facts of the case may be given in the words of the Abbé Dubois, who had thirty years' experience of the people of Southern India; but the actual

performance of such acts of worship is open to the view of every resident in India.

"A woman," he remarks, "adores the basket which serves to bring or hold her necessaries, and offers sacrifice to it, as well as to the rice-mill and other implements that assist her in household labours. A carpenter does the like homage to his hatchet, his adze, and other tools, and likewise offers sacrifice to them. A Brahman does so to the style with which he is going to write, a soldier to the arms he is to use in the field, a mason to his trowel, and a labourer to his plough."

Here, then, is a variety of instances exactly corresponding to the case cited by the prophet Habakkuk, in which the Hindus worship, not mentally, but outwardly and literally, the implements of their craft, and the instruments by which they procure their livelihood. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the words of the prophet are to be interpreted literally when he says: "Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous."

The Hindus worship in a similar manner an infinite variety of objects, viewed either as beneficent or maleficent in their operation. In their ignorance of the true object of worship, their whole system of religious belief and practice seems constructed on the principle of paying worship to the beneficent objects and powers of Nature, from a feeling of gratitude; and to those that are

destructive, from an emotion of dread and a desire to deprecate their anger. Thus, their three great gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, appear to be the personification respectively of the creative, conservative, and destructive powers of Nature. Brahma, the creator, being represented by the earth; Vishnu, the preserver, by water; and Siva, the destroyer, by fire. When represented together, they are styled Trimourti, or the Three Powers.

It is well known with what sacredness the cow and the bull are regarded in India; and doubtless the sentiment primarily arose from a consideration of their great utility to man, in accordance with the principle just referred to. And as a further illustration of the actual worship of objects that men have found beneficial to themselves, we shall quote an account of part of the "Feast of the Pongol," celebrated annually in India for three days at the winter solstice, and consequently occurring about the season of our Christmas.

"On the third day of the festival called the *Pongol of Cows*, the following ceremony is performed:—In a great vessel filled with water they put some saffron, the seeds of the tree Parati, and leaves of the tree Vepu. After being well mixed, they go round all the cows and oxen belonging to the house several times, sprinkling them with the water, as they turn to the four cardinal points. The Sashtangam, or prostration of the eight members, is made before them four times. Men only perform this ceremony, the women staying away. The cows are

then all dressed out, their horns being painted with various colours, and garlands of flowers and foliage put round their necks and over their backs. They likewise add strings of cocoa-nuts and other fruits, which are soon shaken off by the brisk motion of the animals which these trappings occasion, and are picked up by children and others, who follow the cattle on purpose, and greedily eat what they gather as something sacred. They are then driven in herds through the villages, and made to scamper about from side to side by the jarring noise of many-sounding instruments. The remainder of the day they are allowed to feed at large without a keeper; and whatever trespasses they commit are suffered to pass without notice or restraint. At last the festival concludes by taking the idols from the temples, and carrying them in pomp to the place where the cattle have been again collected. Dancing-girls, who are found at all ceremonies, are not wanting here. They march at the head of a great concourse of people, now and then making a pause to exhibit their wanton movements, and charm the audience with their lascivious songs. The whole terminates with a piece of diversion, which appears to be waggishness rather than any part of the ceremony. The numerous rabble who are present form themselves into a ring, and a live hare is let go in the midst of it. Poor puss, finding no outlet by which it can escape, flies to one side and the other, sometimes making a spring over the heads of the throng, which produces incredible mirth in the crowd, till the creature

is at length worn out and caught. The idols are then reconducted to the temples with the same pomp as when they were brought away. And thus closes the festival of the Pongol, the most celebrated, undoubtedly, of all the rites which are performed during the course of the year."





III.

National Exclusiveness at Meals.

IT will be remembered that Joseph, when he entertained his brethren, before making himself known to them, could not eat with them, although they were in his own house. He had conformed to the habits and usages of the Egyptians; and it is said, "The Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians" (Gen. xliii. 32). By the law of Moses, the Israelites were prohibited from eating many kinds of food. "The object of interdicting so many sorts of food," says Jahn, in his "Biblical Archæology," "was to prevent the Hebrews from eating with the Gentiles, or frequenting their idolatrous feasts, by means of which they might, and probably would, have been seduced to idolatry." When Daniel was a young man, and was being brought up at the court of the King of Babylon, he refused to eat of the meat appointed him by King Nebuchadnezzar, and requested that he might have pulse

and water instead, alleging that the king's meat would be defilement to him (Dan. i. 5-16). The apostle Peter, on being introduced to the company assembled at the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius, at Cæsarea, says to them, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts x. 28). Obedient to what God had just taught him by the vision, Peter accordingly accepted the hospitality of Cornelius, and ate bread with the Gentiles. But we find that he was immediately found fault with as soon as he returned to the society of his brethren. "And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem," we are told, "they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (Acts xi. 2, 3); and the Christian Jews were not satisfied until Peter had fully explained the circumstances of his conduct, and how God had specially instructed him to do as he had done, and had further shown his approval of his conduct by sending his Holy Spirit on those with whom he had been uniting in fellowship. It might, from the narrative, be supposed that Peter had now received an unmistakable lesson as to the perfect legality of eating with the Gentiles; yet so strong was the influence of custom and prejudice, both in himself and his fellow-Jews, that we find him on one occasion afraid to continue the practice. In his letter to the Galatians, St.

Paul records : " But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles : but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision " (Gal. ii. 11, 12).

These early difficulties in the Christian Church, as well as the national exclusiveness of the Israelites in respect to eating with other nations, are abundantly illustrated by facts and customs to be found in India at the present day. It is remarkable how wide is the range within which the existence of the institution of caste may be traced. It was to be found, in a greater or less degree, amongst the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, and even in the New World, amongst the Peruvians and Mexicans. But the most striking instance of all is that supplied by the Hindus, amongst whom the institution is found in full force down to the present day.

It has been matter of question whether, in the case of the lower castes amongst the Hindus, the social compact is or is not an advantage to them, on the whole—so oppressive and stringent is the operation of the rules of caste. The Gentoo Code, for instance, declares : " If a man of inferior caste, proudly affecting an equality with a person of superior caste, should speak at the same time with him, the magistrate, in that case, shall punish him to the extent of his abilities." The Code of Menu—the sacred law-book—says : " A man of the servile caste,



THE REQUIREMENTS OF CASTE.

whether bought or unbought, a Brahman may compel to perform servile duty, because such a man was created by the Self-existent for the purpose of serving Brah-

mans." On the other hand, this institution confers most important immunities and advantages on those of the higher castes, and especially on the Brahmans. Amongst other privileges assigned to them, Brahmans are exempted from taxes, and it is inculcated as a meritorious act to present them with gifts. The Book of Menu declares: "Never shall the King kill a Brahman, though convicted of all possible crimes; let him banish the offender from his realm, with all his property secure, and his body unhurt."

In no particular of their daily life are the Hindus affected more by the rules of caste than in reference to eating and cooking. Not only must not a Hindu eat with a foreigner, but he durst not do so with another Hindu of a different caste from his own, without incurring the most serious defilement. Hence a Brahman, for instance, is often obliged, on a journey, to cook his own food, from not having one of his own caste to do so.

It is a curious sight to witness a Hindu prepare his daily meal. He first draws a circle of about six feet in diameter, and plasters mud over the entire area of this circle. He next erects a fireplace of mud, consisting of three walls about a foot in height and nearly a foot apart. Within this mud fireplace, which must never be an old one—or, if old, must be replastered with mud—he places the fuel, and then puts his "chattie," containing his rice, on the top. Should any person of an inferior caste enter this circle (one of a superior caste, for his own sake, would not do so), the effect is to spoil the

whole meal; for the rice would be at once thrown away, and the person and the vessels of the person thus defiled would have to go through a careful purification. Nay, should even the *shadow* of a Pariah, as he passes, fall across the circle, a like catastrophe would ensue! Our artist has often witnessed the occurrence of such scenes.

The Rev. Mr. Ward, an American missionary, mentions a similar case which came under his observation. "I once saw," he says, "a high caste Hindu dash an earthen jar of milk upon the ground, and break it to atoms, merely because the shadow of a Pariah had fallen upon it as he passed." The same author quotes another case, to show the extreme horror with which a Hindu regards food which has been polluted, as he thinks, by contact with one of an inferior caste, or a foreigner—which latter is viewed as on a level with the Pariahs, or outcasts. "As I entered the dwelling," says Mr. Ward, "I saw lying upon the centre of the floor a man of middle age, apparently near his end; while at a little distance was his wife, much in the same state. A little girl was kneeling at their side, asking in an earnest, bitter tone for rice. I called to a servant, who had accompanied me, to bring a basket of provisions, which I opened before the child, when the unhappy father, turning his eye upon me with a look of horror, threw out his arms like a maniac, seized the famishing creature, dragged it from the polluted food, and fell back dead!"

As we read in the law of Moses of certain kinds of food being prohibited, so it is well known that the

Hindus are interdicted from the flesh of the cow and the bull. The law forbidding the use of the flesh of these animals for food is most stringent in its operation. The Rev. Sydney Smith quotes the following case to illustrate this point: "In the year 1766, the late Lord Clive and Mr. Verelst employed the whole force of Government to restore a Hindu to his caste, who had forfeited it, not by any neglect of his own, but by having been compelled, by a most unpardonable act of violence, to swallow a drop of cow-broth. The Brahmans, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, were very anxious to comply with the wishes of Government. The principal men among them met once at Kishnughur, and once at Calcutta; but after consultation, and an examination of their most ancient records, they declared to Lord Clive, that, as there was no precedent to justify the act, they found it impossible to restore the unfortunate man to his caste; and he died soon after, of a broken heart."

It will be easily seen how great a hindrance the institution of caste presents to the spread of Christianity amongst the Hindus. There can be no social intercourse at meals between missionaries and the natives, and consequently all the influences, direct and indirect, that can on such occasions be exerted, are excluded. The arrogant and un-Christian spirit, moreover, which the institution engenders in the minds of the higher castes towards the lower, is a most serious obstacle to the spread of Christian truth. Nothing can more exactly

portray the behaviour of the higher castes, and especially the Brahmans, towards the lower, and towards Pariahs, than the conduct of the priest and the Levite towards the man who fell among thieves, as described by the Evangelist. Mr. Ward, who had long experience of the natives of India, says: "A Brahman would sooner see a Sudra (one of the lowest caste) die than give him food, if in doing so he must touch the body or clothes of the debased one. It is said that a company of the professed teachers of right and duty will stand upon the river's bank, and see a boat-load of Pariahs go to the bottom, rather than use any personal effort to save them from death." One of the greatest sources of dread to the Hindu is the loss of his caste; and this is incurred by becoming a Christian. To "lose caste," until lately, in addition to all the other penalties, involved the surrender of the entire paternal estate and inherited wealth; so that, on professing himself a Christian, he had literally to "forsake all that he had." "Naraput Singh," says Mr. Ward, "a convert in Bengal, during the days of his heathenism lived like a nabob, with his train of servants and splendour of Oriental equipage. But the moment he submitted to the ordinance of baptism, and embraced the truth, his relatives seized upon his property, to the amount of forty thousand dollars; since which time he has been labouring for the support of himself and family, at five dollars per month."



IV.

Hidden Treasure.

IN all Eastern countries the practice has prevailed, amongst the wealthy, of hiding their treasures. Traces of this custom are to be met with from the earliest times. We read that the patriarch Jacob, when filled with fear on account of what his sons Simeon and Levi had done in slaughtering the Shechemites and spoiling their city, commanded his household to put away the strange gods from among them. "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem" (Gen. xxxv. 4). At a period so early as the time of Job, not only did the custom of hiding treasure exist, but the practice of searching for concealed treasures was a matter of public notoriety.

A curious inscription on a very ancient Phœnician sarcophagus further shows at what an early date professed treasure-seekers plied their occupation, and that

with such unscrupulous zeal as not even to leave royal tombs undisturbed. The commencement of the inscription, when translated, reads thus :—"In the month Bul in the fourteenth—xiv—of my reign, King Ashmunazer, the king of the Sidonians, son of Tabnith, king of the Sidonians,—King Ashmunazer, king of the Sidonians, spake saying, I am snatched away before my time, like the flowing of a river. Then I have made a house for my funeral resting-place, and am lying in this sarcophagus and in this sepulchre, the place which I have built. My prohibition to every royal person, and to every man, not to open my sepulchre, and not to seek with me treasures—for there are no treasures with me—nor to take away the sarcophagus of my funeral couch, nor to transfer me with my funeral couch upon the couch of another."*

This expressed wish of the poor king has been sadly disregarded ; for not only has the tomb been rifled, but the entire sarcophagus has been carried off to France, spite of the heavy malediction with which Ashmunazer threatened its disturbers.

It is not difficult to account for the universal prevalence of the custom of hiding money and valuables in the earth and other secret places. Apart from the fact of there not existing in those times one of a thousand of the ways that now lie open for the advantageous employment of money and wealth, there was lacking what was still more important—namely, security. The

* "The Land and the Book," p. 138.

very existence of such a wide-spread custom as that referred to, is a sad and convincing proof of the general feeling of insecurity that then pervaded society. That Palestine formed no exception to the prevailing state of things in Asia, is evident from the number of Biblical references to the practice of concealing treasure. If we recollect what was the condition of the country during the age of the Judges, and then under the divided sovereignties of Israel and Judah, we shall see to how great a degree foreign invasion, conjoined with domestic feuds and usurpations, made up the history of the country. Nor did matters improve during the later periods of the Jewish annals; for, not to speak of the captivities to Nineveh and Babylon, by which the people were swept away wholesale, as with a flood, the period including the Maccabees, and from that down to the Christian era, was eminently one of commotion and insecurity. In such a condition of society, it was the common practice for families to bury in the earth, or to hide in secret chambers prepared in their dwellings, their jewels and other valuables, upon the approach of danger. It would not unfrequently happen that these treasures would never afterwards be removed by their owners,—either through the whole family being killed or carried off, or at least those individuals of the household who were privy to the concealment.

That it was a common custom in Palestine to hide jewels and other valuables in the earth for security, appears not only from the passage quoted respecting

Jacob hiding his jewels and images at Shechem, but from several other passages besides.

When Achan was called on by Joshua to make confession of his trespass after having been detected by means of the lot, he acknowledged his guilt, stated what he had taken, and added : " And, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it " (Josh. vii. 21).

In like manner, when the lepers at the gate of Samaria found the camp of the Syrians deserted, we are told they took " silver, and gold, and raiment, and hid them " (2 Kings vii. 8)—doubtless, in the earth—until they could with safety remove them.

So, too, in our Lord's parable of the Talents, the fabricated excuse of him who had received the one talent points to the prevalence of the same practice : " And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth " (Matt. xxv. 25). A still more direct reference to the custom is the parable in which " the kingdom of heaven is likened to treasure hid in a field " (Matt. xiii. 44).

Not only were gold and jewels concealed underground, but, as we have already seen, even garments were thus placed in security ; and from a passage contained in the history of the troublous times that followed the transportation of the greater part of the people to Babylon, we find mention made of grain and other produce thus concealed : " But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not : for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of

honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren" (Jer. xli. 8).

These facts, quoted in regard to Palestine, find a parallel in the past as well as in the present condition of things in India. Under the government of the native Hindu princes, and during the period of the Mohammedan supremacy, a similar state of insecurity prevailed throughout India. This condition of things was due not only to the revolutions in the government, and the hostile inroads to which the people were subject, but perhaps quite as much to the oppression and caprice of the rulers. A Hindu might, at one time, be in the highest favour with his sovereign, and universally flattered and courted; but an enemy infuses some suspicion into the tyrant's mind, and forthwith the late favourite's house is surrounded and despoiled of everything, his family being at the same time disgraced, and he himself, if not immediately executed, at least thrown into confinement. It was, in fact, a dangerous thing for any one to have the reputation of being wealthy, as he would be sure thereby to attract the notice of the prince, who would look upon the wealth which he might possess as only so much in bank for himself, to be extorted by torture, if necessary, whenever occasion might require. Hence, to shield, if possible, some part of their property from foreign enemies and tyrannical rulers, the Hindus have for ages been wont to hide their treasures in the earth, and in secret chambers. As an instance of the occasions on which they would be led to do so, we may



IN SEARCH OF HID TREASURE.

cite the following case : " The night before the departure of Sheikh Muckdum (the Nabob's late killidar of the fort of Onore), Captain Torriano privately delivered to him

the jewels belonging to his family, which, at the commencement of the storm by the English, had been secreted under some ruins."* But a more constant ground for concealment than foreign inroad, lay in the tyrannical exactions of the native rulers already referred to ; and to these they were at all times exposed.

In consequence of this custom of concealing jewels and valuables in time of danger, which in many cases the owners never recovered, there are to be found, all over India, persons who make it their business to search for these hid treasures. Such persons, as might be expected, are found chiefly at work among the ruins of old cities, and more especially amongst the very extensive ruins that lie to the west and south of the city of Delhi. These ruins occupy an area of from twelve to twenty miles in circumference, being probably the remains of two cities that in succession have borne the name of Delhi previous to the existing city. This immense tract offers a wide field for the operations of treasure-seekers, and a considerable portion of the population of Delhi goes out every morning to dig amongst the ruins, and to break up the pavements, and pull down the old walls, in search of concealed treasure.

As a rule, these treasure-seekers are not very successful, although, from their steady devotion to the occupation, it must needs yield them something. When treasure is discovered, it is more often by accident than as the result of well-directed search. A case of treasure-

* Forbes's "Oriental Memoirs," vol. iv., p. 112.

finding is recorded in the "Asiatic Journal" for 1836, which may be quoted. "A faquir, by name Ramtullāh Khan," says the *Delhi Gazette*, "was fortunate enough to discover a vessel containing 500 mohars (from £700 to £800). Dost Mohammed Khan having been informed of this circumstance, ordered the faquir into his presence; and having obtained an acknowledgment of the discovery, dismissed the faquir with a remark which would do credit to a more enlightened government: 'As you have,' said the Sirdar, 'without equivocation, confessed you found the coin, I now confirm you in the possession of it; which would not have been the case had you uttered any untruth.'"

There are large numbers of treasure-seekers to be found in Palestine as well as in India at the present day; and so firmly does the belief in the existence of concealed treasure possess the minds of the people of the former country, that the wild Bedawin Arabs look with extreme jealousy on European travellers who go to explore the ruins of historic sites, as *they* can conceive of no other rational motive that could induce them to incur all the labour of a visit, except it be a desire to discover the treasures that lie concealed amongst the ruins.

Throughout Palestine, as well as India, the belief universally prevails that every spot in which treasure is concealed is guarded by spirits in one form or another, who are only to be overcome and the treasure obtained by the use of certain potent charms and incantations.

"The idea prevails all over India, that wherever articles of great value, either of gold or jewels, are deposited, a genius, assuming the form of a snake, is appointed to guard it; and as snakes are usually found in the holes and corners of dilapidated edifices, the treasure-seekers meet with what they consider continual proofs of the truth of this assertion."*

As might be expected from the nature of their pursuit, treasure-seekers are liable to intense excitement when any prospect of success appears to present itself. Under such circumstances they will toil with the greatest ardour and perseverance through the live-long night, only, in the majority of instances, to find themselves at daybreak wearied and fevered with anxiety, and unsuccessful in their search. The consideration of the intense eagerness of these treasure-seekers in their pursuit, will lend much force to the words of Job, when he speaks of "the bitter in soul, which long for death,...and dig for it more than for hid treasures" (Job iii. 21). With more pleasure do we turn, however, to the use which the wise man makes of this fact, when he says to the young man: "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then" thou shalt not be like the poor jaded and too often disappointed treasure-seeker, and fail of your object; but then "shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. ii. 3-5).

* "Asiatic Journal," vol. xxiv., p. 61.



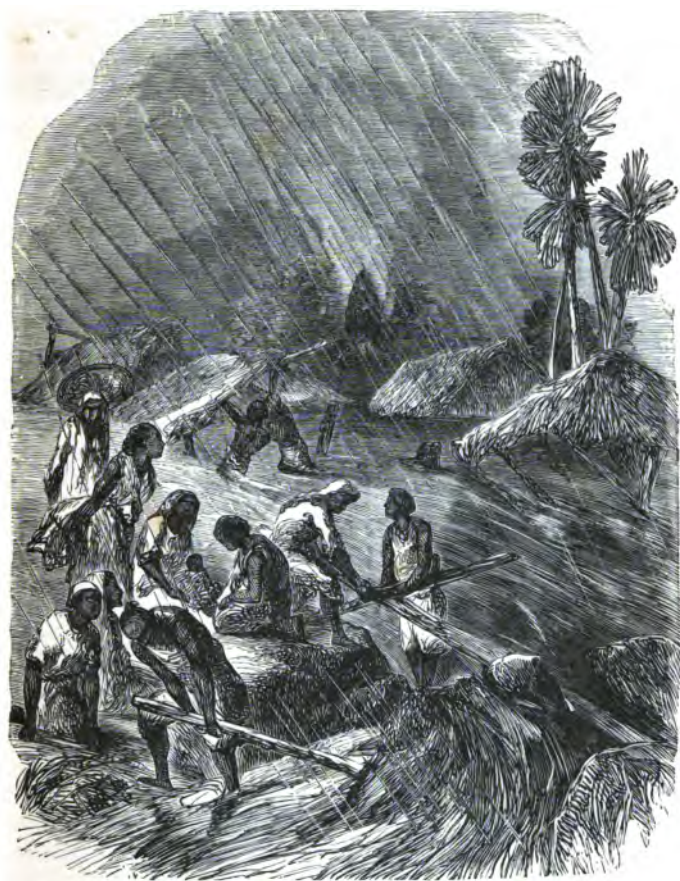
V.

The House Swept away by the Rains.

OUR Lord ends his "Sermon on the Mount" with a very striking similitude, illustrative of the fate of those who should hear his words and do them, and of those who should hear and do them not: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt. vii. 24-27).

Now these words do not express a mere picture, borrowed from the imagination, as some are apt to suppose;

but they have their counterpart in actual fact. It is customary for rivers in Palestine, as well as in India, to rise at the commencement of the "rainy season" with great suddenness, and to flow with astonishing violence. Of course, this inundation, being so far regular, is expected, and is naturally provided against as far as possible; but accidents often happen from the uncertainty in respect to the exact date and extent of the rise of the waters. The difference of surface covered by the rivers of India during the wet and the dry seasons is very great. The Ganges near Boglipore, for instance, in the dry season ranges from one to two miles in breadth, but in the rainy season is from seven to eight miles broad. The Sone, a tributary of the Ganges, has a sandy bed in the dry season of about three miles in breadth, but this bed is well-nigh full in the season of the rains. During the dry season, however, it is usual for the fishermen to build their houses in the sandy bed of the stream; and sometimes they and their dwellings are carried away together, when at certain times floods have descended unexpectedly, or the rains set in earlier than usual. Sometimes a local storm of great violence will swell the river, and cause it to rise from fifteen to twenty feet in a few hours; when, of course, houses built in the position of those referred to in the bed of the Sone would inevitably be carried away; thus realizing our Lord's words respecting the house built upon the sand. The inhabitants of such dwellings intend, of course, to vacate them before the floods come; just as



THE RESULTS OF A STORM.

many persons resolve to leave the ungodly ways denounced as ruinous in the words of our Lord, before the swift-following destruction arrives ; but both are apt to

be surprised before they are aware, and carried away by a sudden destruction.

We have only a faint conception in this country of the violence of tropical and sub-tropical storms. There are many Scripture references to the intensity of such storms, which are spoken of as "an overflowing rain" (Ezek. xxxviii. 22), "floods" (Isa. xlv. 3), and in other similar terms; and it may be remembered that when the promised rain was at length about to come, after the long preceding drought, the prophet Elijah said to Ahab, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not" (1 Kings xviii. 44). Travellers in India are frequently stopped in their journey by a sudden storm; not as we might be, to avoid the discomfort of the wet, but through inability to proceed, from the quantity of rain that has fallen causing every brook and river to overflow. The following incident, narrated in Bartolomeo's "*Voyage to the East Indies*," may be given as an instance:—

"On the 16th of October 1776, I proceeded from Mailapuri to Sadras, where I passed the night. The weather at that time was more tempestuous than I had ever seen it on the coast of Coromandel; because the winter commences there about the 20th of October. The rain then pours down in torrents; the rivers and streams precipitate themselves from the ghauts with prodigious noise, inundate the highways, and swell up to such a degree that they overflow their banks, and sweep away houses, trees, men, and animals. This was

exactly the case on the 17th of October, in the morning, when I arrived at the river Palar, or Palarru, which discharges itself into the sea on the south of Madras. It was nearly half a mile in breadth, and flowed along with the utmost violence and impetuosity. All the travellers from Sadras were obliged to stop here, because there were no boats to carry them over. In less than half an hour some intrepid swimmers managed to reach the opposite bank. When my coolies saw that, they stripped in the like manner, and having sought out two pieces of wood, bound them fast together, and putting my dooly upon them, pushed it into the water. They then desired me to place myself in the dooly, to draw up my feet, and to hold fast with both my hands. I was so terrified at this proposal," says the padre, "that my heart began to palpitate. They however repeated it; and as I clearly saw that it would be impossible to get over in any other manner, I promised my coolies a rupee, contracted myself in my dooly as much as I could, held fast by the pole, and, rather dead than alive, sat as it were in the water, which every now and then forced itself in around me. The coolies began to swim, and from time to time gave the dooly a smart push, in order that it might advance also. Four of them swam on the right side, and four on the left; all taking care that it should not deviate from its proper direction. When we reached the middle of the river, where the force and velocity of the stream were greatest, they began all together to push and exert themselves, bawling out as

loud as they could. My dooly now seemed to dance with me on the waves, which tossed us up and down ; but by incessant labour and exertion, I was pushed to the shore without any misfortune. I then gave my coolies the rupee I had promised them, changed my clothes, and continued my journey to Puduceri.*

An old French traveller, M. Monfart, in a small work which he terms "An Exact and Curious Survey of all the East Indies," thus describes, in 1615, his experience of the climate of Goa :—"This is a Climate," he says, "where it raines, without intermission, the three moneths of Winter, and so outrageously, that it is vnpossible to keepe the sea vppon that coast, without Shipwracke."

A stranger who saw India in "the rains," might think that after such deluging showers the soil could never become thirsty for lack of moisture, yet it very soon does, after the dry season has commenced ; and before it has far advanced it has become quite parched and baked, and in some places cracked by the heat into seams so wide that it is occasionally difficult to leap across them ! Jeremiah the prophet similarly alludes to the ground being "chapt" through lack of rain, so that "the ploughmen were ashamed" and confounded, and "covered their heads" (Jer. xiv. 4). During drought in India, not only would it be useless for the ploughman to plough the soil, but he would not succeed should he attempt it, so hard baked is the ground by the sun ; for their plough is too rude of construction to be of any service while the land

* Translated by Dr. Forster of Halle.

is in such a state. The annual rains set in with tolerable regularity in the various districts of India, but not in all parts at the same time. It rains, however, in most places throughout India between the end of June and the middle of September; so that God sends to India, as he promised to the Israelites, "rain in due season" (Lev. xxvi. 4).

Job, during his afflictions, thus speaks respecting himself in the time of his prosperity: "They waited for me as for the rain" (Job xxix. 23); because he had been a benefactor unto them. The language is equally applicable to India, where rain is looked for by the anxious ryots as the greatest of benefactors, being the agent that covers their fields with that produce on which their sole reliance is placed for a livelihood for themselves and their families.

But whilst the rains are thus the source of life to the husbandman, they are viewed with a measure of anxiety by those of them who live in the vicinity of such large rivers as the Ganges; for should the supply prove more abundant than usual, an inundation is apt to follow, and sweep away completely the crop that has sprung up. A writer in the "*Asiatic Researches*"* says: "The inundations which are occasioned by the overflowing of the rivers frequently destroy the crop through a large extent of country, or so much injure it, that by this alone the laborious husbandman is often so reduced in his circumstances, as to be unable—or so discouraged as to be afraid—to carry on the cultivation of the soil with any degree

* Vol. x., p. 24.

of spirit. It is difficult to provide sufficiently against the effect of inundations." The *Hurkaru*, of June 18, 1839, says: "Yesterday's dawk brought disastrous news from more than one quarter respecting indigo. The river Kosee, and little Gunduck, had come down with such force, that the Ganges rose three feet in one night, and much timber had been carried away or buried by this sudden and unexpected rise." The following is an extract from the letter of a planter in the Purneah district: "The Kunkur, a mountain stream that comes from the Morung hills, rose upwards of seven feet during the night, overflowed its banks and all my embankments, and in less than twelve hours the greater part of my cultivation was under water."*

Even more serious results than these are sometimes produced by the inundations. The "*Asiatic Journal*" for 1836 records: "The rains this year have been heavier than in the last ten years, and the inundations higher than at any former season. Hundreds of villages have been swept away, and the eastern part of Bengal, for hundreds of miles, resembles a vast ocean, studded with here and there an island, with a village on it."

It may serve to give a more distinct notion of the violence of the changes produced by the annual rains in such countries as India and Palestine, if we quote the remarks made in the "*Asiatic Researches*" respecting the changes sometimes made in the Ganges during these annual floods. "During the rains great changes occur

* "*Asiatic Journal*," vol xxx., p. 66.

in the course of the Ganges and other rivers of Bengal, to a large extent owing to the loose character of the soil." Major R. H. Colebrooke mentions that a considerable portion of what had been the main channel of the Ganges, had become so completely filled with sand, that he hardly knew himself to be in the same part of the river. "The sand in some parts rose several feet above the level of the stream, and the people had already begun to cultivate sursoo and rice in the very spots where the deepest water had formerly been. Two islands of considerable extent appeared to be quite new, and the channel in some places had been reduced from the breadth of an English mile to a furlong or less. The main stream having forced its way in a new direction, did not at this time pass nearer to the inlet of the Howleah than three and a half miles, nor nearer than two to Horrisouker. This remarkable change, I was informed, took place during the extraordinary inundation of 1796. The marks of the inundation were indeed very visible at Dewangunge, but in one part of the channel opposite to it, where I expected to have met with the first shallow, I sounded from twenty to sixty feet, in the very place where there had been a ford but two years before."

There is another point deserving of special notice, in the similitude used by our Lord to represent the manner in which those should be destroyed who should disregard his words. A large proportion of the houses to be found in Palestine at the present day—and the same remark applies also to those of past ages—are constructed of mud.

Our climate, owing to its abounding moisture and its comparative coldness, makes it imperative that our houses should be of very solid and enduring materials; but such is not the case in Palestine, nor in India, where whole towns may be found built of mud, with only a few houses of more substantial materials, belonging to the chief persons of the town. Such houses as these would not only be certain to be swept away by an inundation, such as that to which our Lord refers, without leaving even a trace of them remaining; but even where they are not exposed to any such peril, they require to be most carefully repaired every year before the season of "the rains," else they would soon begin to crack and crumble into pieces, until at length they fell and buried the inhabitants beneath their ruins. It is to this that Solomon refers when he says: "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through" (Eccles. x. 18). It is to such frail structures as these that Eliphaz alludes, when, speaking of men, he says in his reply to Job: "How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth" (Job iv. 19).

These houses of mud are everywhere found in India; and the native town of Calcutta is almost entirely built of mud, whilst the European quarter is so elegantly built as to lead to the city being called "a city of palaces." Dr. Buchanan alludes to a better class of mud dwellings, which he saw during his journey through the south of

India. He says: "The mud here (near Baydamungulum, in the Madras Presidency) is excellent for making walls. It is a reddish ferruginous clay, intermixed with small fragments of quartz, and other materials of decayed granite; and a wall constructed of it will, with tolerable care, resist the rains for many years. So good is it, that in many towns and villages the houses have flat roofs, terraced with this mud, which is laid on in the dry season, and turns the rain very well. The houses and huts have their walls universally built of this mud, and have a tolerable appearance, the mud being smoothed and painted on the outside, with alternate vertical broad stripes of white and red."

It is of such houses that Job speaks when he says: "In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime" (Job xxiv. 16). It is also in view of the insecurity of such houses that our Lord cautions his hearers "not to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break," or rather, as the Greek has it, "dig through and steal;" but he recommends them (and ourselves as well as them) to lay up for themselves "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for," he adds, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. vi. 19-21).



VI.

Watering with the Foot.

THE contrast which Moses presented to the people of Israel between the land of Egypt which they had left, and the land of Canaan towards which they were journeying, has been to many the source of a little difficulty, or at least uncertainty, in regard to what exactly is meant by "watering with the foot." "For the land," he says, "whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: but the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven" (Deut. xi. 10, 11).

A writer in the tenth volume of the "Asiatic Researches" thinks the following Indian custom explains the expression. "In dry seasons," he says, "it is often necessary to water the fields. For this purpose an instrument called a *jánt* is used. The *jánt* is a trough of

light wood, from twelve to fourteen feet long, somewhat curved to admit a greater depth in the middle; the bottom is five or six inches wide; the height of the side in the middle part is six or eight inches, gradually decreasing towards the ends, one of which is stopped with a square board, to prevent the water from running back and being lost. When this instrument is used, it is slung to three bamboos placed erect, and crossing each other in the centre; a long and heavy bamboo loaded at the further end with a large ball of earth is then fastened to the end which is to be plunged into the water, and thrown over the erect bamboos. A person standing on a stage even with, or somewhat below, the surface of the water of a pond, river, &c., then plunges the end of the jánt into the water with his foot, by which means it is filled. The weight at the end of the long bamboo assists him in raising it out of the water, and throwing its contents into a small reservoir or pit, from which it is conveyed into the fields by channels cut for that purpose. Two feet or two feet and a half is the height to which water can be thrown with effect by this machine; when the height is greater, two, three, or even more jánts are used, and in that case the water is thrown into small reservoirs or pits, at a proper height above each other, and sufficiently deep to admit of the next jánt being plunged deep enough to fill it. Water is by this means sometimes conveyed to the distance of a mile or more on every side of a large tank or reservoir of water. I have seen fifty or sixty jánts at one time, in a large receptacle

of water called Mahápal-dighí, about six coss from Dinajpur."

The point to which the writer of the above account refers, as furnishing an illustration of the expression "watering with the foot," is the fact of the foot being employed to depress the trough of the jánt into the water in the course of working the machine. This scarcely appears to us a point sufficiently characteristic or important to justify the process being termed that of "watering with the foot." There are very many operations in which the foot is used to assist, to a greater or less extent, and more especially so in India, where the natives are particularly skilful in the use of the foot as a substitute for the hand. There is another objection, we think, to the interpretation just cited being taken as the correct explanation of the expression, "watering with the foot,"—namely, that there appear no traces of the use of such an instrument as the jánt by the Egyptians on the Nile. The machine that is used on that river at the present day, and which, according to Wilkinson, seems to have been used from the most ancient times, is "the shadoof," which is of a different construction and method of working.

But while the practice which has been referred to does not explain the Scripture allusion, there is another Indian custom which, we think, does meet the case; and it is thus in part described by an old Indian traveller. "There is commonly in these gardens" (referring to those of India) "a great pit, or kind of

fish-pool, which is full of rain-water, and just by it there is a basin of brick, raised about two feet higher than the ground. When, therefore, they have a mind to water the garden, it is filled with water from the fish-pool or pit, which through a hole that is at the bottom falls into a canal, which is divided into many branches, proportionable in bigness to their distance from the basin, and carries the water to the foot of each tree, and to each plot of herbs; and when the gardeners think they are watered enough, they stop up or turn aside the canals with clods of earth." To complete the illustration of the point in hand, it is only necessary to add to the foregoing description the fact that the "canals" referred to, which he remarks "are stopped up or turned aside with clods of earth," are usually so "stopped up or turned aside" by the *foot* of the *málí*, or gardener. From the reservoir, which is elevated somewhat above the level of the ground, little channels are conducted in regular lines all over the garden, which is thus divided into small square plots, so that a little stream can thereby be brought close to the roots of every tree or flower; and the gardener regulates the course of the water by using his foot to stop up with earth one little channel, and to open another, and thus he can turn the stream as he desires.

The author of "Delhi" thus describes the process as observed in India:—"The other day I saw, for the first time, the Eastern mode of watering a garden. The well is at some little distance, at the top of a little rise. A bullock-skin is drawn up by a pair of little oxen,

who run down a short slope with much glee, and thus raise the water; they are then loosened from the rope, and walk up the hill again, while the water is poured into a channel from whence it flows down to the garden, and runs from one little sloping channel to another; the *málí*, or gardener, carefully removing all obstructions from its path. It makes one understand the expression, 'He watereth it with his foot;' for with the foot you can easily open a passage through the little ridges of earth, or bar the progress of the tiny stream."

Now this process corresponds exactly to the practice of the ancient Egyptians, as stated by Sir G. Wilkinson in his work on that subject. Herbs and plants which require constant irrigation, and which will not grow like grain in the open field, with only occasional watering, they were wont to plant in ground separated by furrows into little plots, round which the water flowed as guided by the foot of the gardener; and it is worthy of note, that it is just such "gardens of herbs" that Moses alludes to in the passage cited. This artificial irrigation was absolutely necessary in Egypt, where rain falls so very rarely; but the practice was not confined to Egypt, for Job speaks of "waters forgotten of the foot" (Job xxviii. 4); and the prophet Ezekiel speaks of a vine which "did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation" (Ezek. xvii. 7).

Although Palestine is in reality, as was predicted, "a land of brooks of water and of fountains," and a land



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which "drinketh water of the rain of heaven," still even there "gardens" will not flourish, unless they are continually irrigated by artificially directing the fountains

that abound, or by conveying to them from other sources a constant supply of water. The importance of such a continual supply is strikingly brought before us in the numerous Scripture references to the subject. Thus, for instance, those that forsake the Lord are compared to "a garden that hath no water" (Isa. i. 30). On the other hand, when his people returned unto him and did works of righteousness, it is said of them: "Thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. lviii. 11); or in the corresponding words of Jeremiah: "Their soul shall be as a watered garden" (Jer. xxxi. 12).

In both India and Palestine the very existence of a garden depends on an abundant and uninterrupted supply of water; and where the presence of this essential requisite can be commanded, almost any spot in these countries, though before a desert, may be made like "the garden of the Lord."

These facts may be of use to impress upon our minds the spiritual truth, that whether the individual soul or the Church be likened to a garden, they can neither of them bring forth any spiritual fruits, unless continually watered by the influences of God's Holy Spirit. Hence, in speaking of Israel as his vineyard, Jehovah says: "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment" (Isa. xxvii. 3). And when the Lord, in answer to fervent and united prayer, gives his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, then even a land that is desolate will become like the garden of Eden.



VII.

Winnowing with the Fan.

FAHN, in his "Biblical Antiquities," thus describes the process of winnowing grain, as it was practised among the Jews: "The grain, being threshed, was thrown into the middle of the threshing-floor; it was then exposed with a fork to a gentle wind (Jer. iv. 11, 12), which separated the broken straw and chaff; so that the kernels and clods of earth with grain cleaving to them, and the ears not yet thoroughly threshed, fell upon the ground. The clods of earth, as is customary in the East at the present day, were collected, broken in pieces, and separated from the grain by a sieve. The heap thus winnowed, which still contained many ears that were broken, but not fully threshed out, was again exposed in the threshing-floor, and several yoke of oxen driven over it for the purpose of treading out the remainder of the grain. At length the grain, mingled with the chaff, was again exposed to the wind by a fan, which bore off the chaff, so that the pure wheat fell upon the floor."

The following is the method in which the Mahrattas perform the same process : "When the crop is ripe, it is cut with hooks and carried to the village, where it is piled in large stacks. A space is then cleared for a threshing-floor, on which the grain is trodden out by bullocks muzzled, and afterwards winnowed by the simple operation of pouring it out before the wind." *

On this passage, we may remark, in passing, how it suggests to our favourable notice the more merciful provision enjoined by the law of Moses, than that declared to be the practice of the Mahrattas. The law of Moses proclaims: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" (Deut. xxv. 4). The Mahrattas churlishly muzzle the bullocks that are employed in treading out the corn; suggesting to us that, however merciful the precept of Moses might be in itself, it was probably necessary that it should be made obligatory, in order to its being generally observed. The farmers in Bengal, according to Ward, muzzle the oxen employed in treading out the corn until the upper sheaves are trodden to mere straw, when they unmuzzle them; but a few keep them muzzled throughout the whole of the process.

In both India and Palestine the agency of the wind, when possible, was made use of for winnowing; but sometimes it would require to be performed when there was no wind, and in such cases a fan was used to create a current of air. In India this fan consists of a light frame of split bamboo, shaped like a capital U, and covered

* Broughton's "Letters written in a Mahratta Camp."



WINNOWING WITH THE FAN.

with delicate cane-work. Such a fan usually forms part of the scanty furniture to be found in the houses of the less opulent natives.

It will be remembered, that when the three strangers came to visit Abraham in the plains of Mamre, he pressed them to partake of his hospitality, but at the same time he had nothing actually ready to entertain them with; the kid had to be killed and dressed, and even the cakes of flour required to be specially prepared. This was quite in accordance with the custom of the East, where, owing to the warmth of the climate, meat cannot be kept over a single day, and therefore is only killed when it is to be used; and even bread is new baked at every meal. Even the flour is not kept in stock, but is ground every morning; nay, oftentimes the corn required for the daily cakes is stored up only in the sheaf, which is threshed, winnowed, ground, and baked by the women on the day in which it is used for food. It is a very common sight in the villages of India to see the Hindu women engaged in threshing and then winnowing their corn. This they do on a clear space of ground by the side of the house, which is kept as a threshing-floor, and which has been made level for the purpose, with a layer of mud and cow-dung spread upon it. The grain having been threshed, is there poured out from a broad flat shovel, also made of bamboo; and the straw and chaff are then driven away from it by means of the wind generated by the hand-fan before described.

In the Scriptures the process of winnowing is used to represent the separation of the good from the bad,—of those that receive Christ's words from those that reject

them. Such a scene as that referred to above naturally recalls to the mind the striking metaphor used by John the Baptist respecting the approaching Messiah in these words: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner" (Matt. iii. 12). During the process of threshing as practised in the East, by driving cattle, or by drawing a rough sledge, over the sheaves, the straw is cut up into small pieces, and stubble, chaff, and grain are left all completely commingled; but by the use of the fan the precious is speedily separated from the vile, and the light and worthless chaff is blown away, leaving the weightier grain collected by itself. This is a striking emblem of the separation which the Lord Jesus will hereafter effect, when he "shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xiii. 41, 42).

Winnowing is further used to express a thorough examination; as in Psalm cxxxix. 3, which, translating literally the Hebrew text, stands thus: "Thou hast examined thoroughly—or *winnowed*—my walking and my lying down," &c.; as if they not only passed under his eye, and so were observed, but were further carefully scrutinized.

Then the light and comparatively worthless chaff is often used metaphorically to represent enemies; as when David prays respecting his own enemies, "Let them be as chaff before the wind" (Ps. xxxv. 5); and

respecting the enemies of the Lord, "O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind" (Ps. lxxxiii. 13). Job also says of the wicked: "They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away" (Job xxi. 18).

In countries where the heat of the sun is intense, as it is in Palestine and India, the chaff and stubble, being dry as tinder, burn with a swift and inextinguishable flame; and it is a very frequent practice in both countries to get rid of the chaff thus, by the agency of fire. We are reminded by this fact of the striking similitude which is thence derived, illustrative of the terrible fate of the ungodly, when the final separation between them and the righteous shall have been effected: "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. iii. 12). "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. iv. 1).





VIII.

“The Crackling of Thorns,” and Fuel.

PALESTINE at the present day is very destitute of fuel ; and that indeed to a much greater extent than it seems to have been formerly. The extensive forests that once covered the hills of Palestine have now, for the most part, disappeared, and at the present time forests are rarely to be met with in that country. Frequent reference is made in the Old Testament to coal being employed as fuel ; but we must not suppose that the allusion in such cases is to fossil or pit coal, so well known to us in this country. When coal is spoken of, it is usually charcoal that is meant ; as, for instance, the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the besotted idolaters who hew down a tree, and with part roast flesh, and with another part make a god and worship it, adds : “None considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire ; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof” (Isa. xlv. 19). The same fact is evident

from the words of Ezekiel: "Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned. Then set it [a pot] empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot" (Ezek. xxiv. 10, 11).

It is not improbable that natural, or pit coal, was to some extent known to the inhabitants of Palestine, since, as is mentioned in Kitto's "Bible Cyclopaedia," this coal was made use of in Greece at least three hundred years before Christ. Seams of natural coal, moreover, exist in Syria; and in 1837 a seam was worked by order of Mohammed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, in the neighbourhood of Beyrout, which was found cropping out on the surface of Mount Lebanon, at a considerable elevation above the sea. We are quite at liberty, therefore, to suppose that in a few of the instances in the Old Testament in which coals are referred to, that natural coal is meant; and, indeed, it would rob these passages of much of their energy to interpret the term as alluding to charcoal, with the dull, inanimate glow which it produces. Such passages are Job xli. 19-21, containing part of the magnificent description of leviathan: "Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth." Another passage which may be named forms part of the sublime description of Jehovah in Psalm xviii. 8: "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it."

Although natural coal might thus have been known to some extent in Palestine, it was by no means generally known; and still less are we at liberty to suppose it was generally used as fuel. The ordinary fuel made use of was wood, where it could be obtained; and in places in which wood was scarce, cow-dung was extensively employed for the purpose of fuel; as it is in India at the present day—and, indeed, in very many countries of the East. In passing through a village in India, the traveller may often observe the walls of the Hindu cottages garnished with round cakes of cow-dung stuck all over them. The women—for it is a piece of work which usually falls to their lot to perform—are in the habit of mixing chopped straw with the cow-dung, which is then formed into a round cake, and stuck to the wall by its own adhesiveness to dry. These cakes thus prepared form excellent fuel, giving out when ignited a long-continued and equable heat. Reference is made by Kitto to the fact of cow-dung being esteemed as fuel for baking even in the villages in the south-west of England, on account of its long-sustained and equable heat. There can be little doubt that it was extensively used in Palestine in ancient times, just as it is also at the present day. This may be gathered from the reference made to it in Ezekiel iv. 15.

In both Palestine and India, however, when persons are on a journey, they are often obliged to content themselves with any kind of fuel they can find. Hindu travellers may often be seen engaged in collecting sticks

and thorns, or anything suitable for making a fire, to cook their rice. Thorns, which at certain seasons are dried to tinder by the intense heat of the sun, are frequently made use of, and burn with the greatest rapidity and with a loud crackling sound. To one who has seen these two common kinds of fuel—namely, thorns and cow-dung—made use of by persons in close proximity to each other, the difference in the appearance and the effect of the two combustibles is very striking. In the one case he would observe the ignited cakes of cow-dung glowing with an intense and long-sustained heat, supplying an admirable fire for cooking; whilst the fire of thorns, on the other hand, after a brilliant but short-lived blazing and crackling, would yield scarcely sufficient warmth to heat the vessel that had been placed above them.

"It is better," says the Preacher, "to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool" (Eccles. vii. 5, 6). To a Hindu, or to an ancient Israelite, the comparison of the laughter of the fool to a fire of thorns is a figure that would have had much force. Accustomed to the intense and long-sustained heat of their ordinary fuel, they would regard the noisy combustion, and feeble and transient effect of thorns, as but a poor substitute for it. The exigencies of a journey might compel them to make use of thorns, but they would never do so as a matter of choice. How strikingly does the figure portray the

noisy, boisterous, but. short-lived mirth of the fool ! In Psalm lviii. 9, the Psalmist alludes to the speedy disappearance of the wicked, saying : " Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath." Now thorns burn with peculiar rapidity, and consequently give out almost at once whatever heat they have ; but even " before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind." The same idea is employed by the Psalmist in Psalm cxviii. 12, where he says of his enemies : " They compassed me about like bees ; they are quenched as the fire of thorns : for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them."





IX.

“Broken Cisterns,” and Water.

THE city of Jerusalem depends for its chief supply of water on that which is stored up in cisterns during the season of the rains. Such is the state of things at the present day, and the arrangement appears to have existed from antiquity. Almost every house in Jerusalem has one or more cisterns beneath it, hewn in the rocky formation on which the city is built. This fact is alluded to by Sennacherib's general Rab-shakeh, in his address to the Jews on the wall, when he tried to induce them to surrender the city into his hands: “Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern” (2 Kings xviii. 31). The wise man may also refer to the same fact when he says, “Drink waters out of thine own cistern” (Prov. v. 15). It was announced to the Israelites before their entrance into Canaan, “The Lord thy God bringeth



BROKEN CISTERNS.

thee into a land of brooks of water, and of fountains." And this is true emphatically of the land of Canaan as a whole ; but the hill-country of Judah and the district

about Jerusalem are drier in their character, and would be almost entirely destitute of water at certain seasons, but for its artificial preservation. During the time of the rains, the water which falls on the house-tops of the city is conveyed into the subterranean cisterns of Jerusalem, and if the reservoirs are carefully kept, the water preserved in them will remain sweet and pure; but frequently worms are found generated in it through neglect. Another drawback to these cisterns is, that occasionally the shock caused by earthquakes, which are not unfrequent in the district, cracks the rocky sides or bottom of the cistern, and so renders the reservoir useless; so that these cisterns of Jerusalem, although the best resource open to the inhabitants, are of necessity vastly inferior to a clear, gushing, perennial fountain. We can see how forcible, then, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, would be the words of the Lord through his prophet Jeremiah: "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. ii. 13).

In India it is almost everywhere found desirable, and indeed necessary, to store up water by artificial means, except in the immediate vicinity of a few great rivers. From the earliest times, therefore, it has been the custom to construct great reservoirs called *tanks*, for preserving the abundant supply that falls during the rainy season, but which would soon otherwise run off, and leave the country parched by the intense heat of the

sun. A very common form in which the princes of India have showed at once their munificence and their bounty towards their subjects, has been that of constructing tanks to preserve water. These works are sometimes of immense extent, and are often only in part artificial, inasmuch as a natural hollow or declivity has not unfrequently been selected, and the end of it built up with solid masonry, which acts like a dam to prevent the water from passing off after the season of the rains has ended. In this way bodies of water, often one or two miles, or even more, in extent, are collected and preserved for use. But tanks may be seen of all sizes; and where they are small, the water would not strike a European as being very pleasant to use for domestic purposes, seeing that the natives are continually bathing in them and washing their clothes. Such water the Hindus are obliged occasionally to make use of to drink, when wells are not at hand; and it is very evident how inferior such a supply of water must be, as well as that from the cisterns of Jerusalem, to a "fountain of living waters." "We reached," says a lady in her Journal, "the cocoa-nut wood near the village, where there are two beautiful temples, with large tanks, surrounded by trees. These tanks are the great luxuries of the natives. One sees people bathing in them from morning till night, all ages and sexes together; but they wear as much clothing in the water as out of it!"

Some of the kings of Judah constructed similar works to those referred to as executed by the sovereigns of

India. Amongst the "great works" which Solomon records that he made, were "pools of water;" and Hezekiah is said to have "made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city" (2 Kings xx. 20).

A traveller who visited India at the end of the seventeenth century, thus refers to works of the kind which he saw there: "We find in the Indies that which is very near the same thing with the cisterns which the king of Judah caused to be built in the wilderness; for the pagans look upon it as a work of charity to dig pits and lakes in by-places for the convenience of travellers and flocks. And this is often done as the performance of a vow which is made to their gods, in hopes of obtaining from them either children or good success in their undertakings, or in general some favour."*

The lives of the patriarchs make us familiar with the importance of wells in the south of Palestine. Both Abraham and Isaac had to complain to the king of the Philistines of the injury done to them by having their wells forcibly taken from them by the people of the land. Wells are of equal importance in India, as the heat of the climate makes water one of the first necessities of life. In some districts of India wells are so numerous, and at the same time so ill protected, that it would be very dangerous to travel at night in their neighbourhood, or indeed at any time without care. Around the sites of old towns in Palestine, likewise, there is occasionally considerable danger experienced from the

* "Agreement of the Customs of East Indians and Jews," p. 62.

numerous old cisterns and wells that abound in their vicinity, and which are apt oftentimes to be stumbled on or into without observation. The law of Moses specially provided against danger from this source, by the enactment—"If a man shall open a pit [well], and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein; the owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them" (Exod. xxi. 33, 34).

Empty cisterns were not unfrequently used as prisons; but they often contained a thick layer of mud, being the sediment left by the water that had lain in them. It was in such a place, probably, that Jeremiah was confined. At a time of sin and spiritual declension the Psalmist figuratively describes himself as having fallen into such a place, from which he was rescued by God's gracious help: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock" (Ps. xl. 2).

If we keep in remembrance the excessive heat of the climate, we can imagine to some extent the intense disappointment that must be felt by the Hindu traveller, after passing the day upon the hot and dusty roads, to find that the well on which he was depending for water to slake his thirst is dry! The apostle Peter strikingly compares false teachers to such "wells without water," to which souls thirsting after the word of truth come, but are bitterly disappointed of a supply; whereas, in his Proverbs, Solomon speaks of the "mouth of a righteous man" as "a well of life" (Prov. x. 11).

In the complaint which Zion is represented as uttering on account of her depressed and desolate condition, one particular mentioned in her plaint is, "We have drunken our water for money" (Lam. v. 4). Now, however strange this may appear to us, it is an ordinary occurrence in the towns of India, where the "*bheesties*," or "water-carriers," regularly sell water to strangers and travellers. Water is so easily obtained in our own country, that unless it be for the cost of the conveyance of it, we are not wont to associate the idea of price with the procuring of any supply of it. Accordingly, it appears to us as almost a superfluous piece of self-denial for the Israelites to promise to the king of Edom, when asking leave to pass through his land, "Neither will we drink of the water of the wells. We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it" (Num. xx. 17-19). The prophet Elisha, when predicting to the kings of Judah and Israel their success against Moab, told them to lay waste utterly the whole country, by, amongst other points enumerated, stopping all the wells of water.

In Indian warfare it is a very common practice for the enemy either to stop up or poison the wells in the hostile territory. During the siege of towns in the East, greater distress is generally felt from want of water than from a famine of bread. This source of danger is pointed at in the words forming part of Nahum's denunciation of Nineveh: "Draw thee waters for the siege" (Nahum iii. 14). It is remarkable that

Jerusalem seems never to have been in distress during a siege owing to the failure of water, notwithstanding the dryness of the position—a fact which is explained, doubtless, by the numerous subterranean cisterns which it possesses.

The special necessity of a good supply of water, in the event of the siege of a city in the East, is a contingency which the rulers of our Indian Empire have to guard against; and the Marquis of Hastings makes the following entry in his Journal respecting the water supply of Fort George at Madras :—"Went as soon as it was light to the fort, in order to inspect the works. The water in the tanks—of which there is six months' supply for ten thousand men—is remarkably transparent and sweet, though it is said to have been in the tanks above thirty years. This resource is necessary, lest an enemy should discover and cut off the pipes by which water is brought to the fort from a considerable distance."

Many passages in the Scriptures make us aware of the vast importance of rain in due season for the success of all agricultural pursuits. When Elijah, as an instrument on the behalf of God, declared there should be no rain for a given season, and in consequence no rain descended on the plains of Israel for three years and six months, we find that the people of Israel were reduced to such straits, that even the royal establishment itself could not be provided for without the greatest difficulty. In India they are equally dependent on the regular descent of the rains, as they are in Palestine. Some years

ago there was furnished a melancholy confirmation of the truth of this fact, in the grievous famine that then afflicted, and in some districts partly depopulated, the North-West Provinces of India. The usual rains had not fallen in the previous year, so that the ground was not able to be tilled ; and, indeed, no cultivation could be carried on, except in the immediate vicinity of the rivers, and the Eastern Jumna and Ganges Canals. The famine affected a population of about six millions ; and the severity of it may be judged of from a statement made by the Indian authorities, that in the small subdivision of Bullubghur, in the district of Delhi, two thousand eight hundred and fifty-three are reported to have died from starvation alone. The soil of India may be said to be of inexhaustible fertility ; but everything depends on an adequate supply of water, and this is obtained almost entirely from the rains. In some places a certain area of cultivation is maintained around tanks by means of diligent irrigation ; and if these reservoirs are kept in order, a crop may thereby be ensured, even should no rain fall. Sometimes travellers, whilst journeying through different parts of India, may see these cisterns broken and destitute of water ; and in consequence the fields around them, for want of irrigation, have lapsed into barrenness, and all life, both vegetable and animal, has disappeared from the spot.



CHAPTER X.

Jackals and Dogs.

MOST nations have been careful in regard to the burial of their dead. The Israelites paid particular attention to the custom ; and we find many references in the Old Testament to the indignity supposed to be incurred by having the corpse left exposed to the ravages of wild beasts and birds of prey. Thus, for instance, Goliath, the Philistine, in his haughty and contemptuous defiance of David, says : "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field" (1 Sam. xvii. 44) ; a threat which was soon afterwards fulfilled against himself. On account of the heinous wickedness of Jeroboam, in that he emphatically "made Israel to sin," by setting up the golden calves, it was not only predicted that all his posterity should be cut off, but further, it was added, as a great aggravation of the judgment, "Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat ; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat : for the

Lord hath spoken it" (1 Kings xiv. 11). So likewise the prophet Jeremiah declares respecting the people of Judah, because they had forsaken the Lord, and turned to idolatry, that "the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away" (Jer. vii. 33).

It is evident from these passages that it was considered a very great calamity to have the corpse left exposed to "the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air." By the expression, "beasts of the field," jackals and dogs are principally referred to. In regard to jackals, Jahn says: "There are vast numbers of these animals in Palestine, particularly in Galilee, and near Gaza and Jaffa (Joppa). They devour dead bodies, and are ferocious, but can be kept off with a cane." Not only will jackals devour a dead body, if it is left exposed to their ravages, but they will drag it out of its grave, should it not have been interred at a sufficient depth. Besides the disgust caused by their practice of feeding on dead bodies, jackals are also objects of dislike on account of the dismal howlings with which they fill the air by night, and which travellers describe as particularly frightful. Keeping these two points in view, they will have the effect of infusing great additional energy into the Psalmist's prophetic denunciation of his enemies: "They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes,"—or rather "for jackals," as the original Hebrew word may, and without doubt ought to, be rendered. Not only were

his enemies to be cut off by a sudden and violent death, but their corpses also, instead of being buried in peace, were to be reserved for the jackals to feast on, and to tear to pieces by night, amid frightful yellings and howlings.

In the same catalogue with jackals are to be classed dogs, which abound in the towns of Palestine, as indeed they do in most Eastern towns. These creatures have no particular masters, but range at large through the town, acting the part of scavengers, and greedily seizing any garbage that is thrown into the streets. Being neglected and ill-fed, they become almost half-wild, and are ill-favoured, noisy, and unclean animals. A traveller referring to one of the towns of Palestine, says: "I got bewildered among narrow, crooked lanes, which lead nowhere in particular; and with dogs, hairless and scabby, had a regular battle, until a one-eyed man kindly drove them away, and guided me out of the perplexing labyrinth." It is very evident, from many Biblical references, that they abounded in the cities of Palestine in ancient times; and we may form some idea of their ravenous propensities from the fearful prediction pronounced against the wicked Jezebel, which was as awfully fulfilled. "The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel," was the prophetic denunciation:—"Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came

again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel" (2 Kings ix. 34-36). From their disgusting appearance and habits, they would naturally be despised; and hence to apply the name of dog to any individual, was to use a term indicative of the highest contempt. It is thus used by Abishai in regard to Shimei, when the latter heaped curses upon David as he left Jerusalem, on account of Absalom's rebellion. "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head" (2 Sam. xvi. 9). Here Abishai not only terms him a "dog," but a "dead dog," which is still more contemptuous. So when Elisha declares to Hazael the deeds he was to do in the future, Hazael, disclaiming the perpetration of acts so savage and degrading, says: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Further, Mephibosheth, when replying to the kind assurances of David, as an expression of humility, says: "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (2 Sam. ix. 8).

The facts we have referred to respecting dogs and jackals in Palestine find their counterpart in India. In the latter country jackals abound; and it is not long before the Englishman in India becomes most unpleasantly acquainted with their disagreeable propensities. Mr. Russell thus speaks of his first night in Calcutta: "Just as I was going to sleep, there sounded



JACKALS AND THEIR PREY.

in the night air a scream as of a dying woman close at hand, which chilled the marrow in my bones. It was repeated, mingled with cries and barks, which swept

past the club-house. It turned out to be only a pack of jackals running over the Esplanade in the moonlight." "During the night," says Bishop Heber, "I was completely wakened by the uproar which the jackals made."

Jackals in India act the part of scavengers by night, in the towns and villages. But they do not confine their unclean ravages to the hours of darkness, but may be seen in the day-time feasting on the corpses of Hindus who have been left to die on the edge of the sacred Ganges. So greedy are they after this disgusting prey, that they often swim into the river to lay hold of, and drag out, a putrid corpse that is floating lazily down the stream. "The other night, in coming up the river," says Mrs. Graham, "the first object I saw was a dead body, which had lain long enough in the water to be swollen and to become buoyant. It floated past our boat, almost white from being so long in the water, and surrounded by fish; and as we got to the landing-place, I saw two wild dogs tearing another body, from which one of them had just succeeded in separating a thigh bone, with which he ran growling away. Now, though I am not very anxious as to the manner of disposing of my body, and have very little choice as to whether it is to be eaten by worms or fishes, I cannot see, without disgust and horror, the dead indecently exposed, and torn and dragged about through streets and villages by dogs and jackals. Yet such are the daily sights on the banks of the Hooghly." In view of such facts, we can well understand why the Psalmist should say: "Deliver

my soul from the sword ; my darling from the power of the dog " (Ps. xxii. 20).

Dogs abound in the towns and villages of India, and are similarly dirty, noisy, and ravenous animals to those of Palestine. It is not safe, or at least not pleasant, for a European to go through the Black Town of Calcutta, unless he is armed with a stout cudgel ; for he would otherwise speedily be surrounded by a troop of these ferocious-looking dogs, all barking fiercely at him. One who has been in such a position can appreciate the words of the Psalmist : " For dogs have compassed me : the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me " (Ps. xxii. 16).

By night the dogs and jackals prowl about the towns and devour whatever refuse has been thrown into the streets. The jackals are sometimes to be found abroad during the day, although it is chiefly at night they appear ; and they do not always confine their ravages to carrion and dead bodies. Occasionally they will attack and carry off children in the day-time. The " Asiatic Journal " records an instance of the kind. It says : " During one week two children were attacked by jackals in the suburbs of Calcutta ; one was killed, and the other narrowly escaped, having been snatched away from their jaws."*

The battle-field is, however, the scene in which dogs and jackals riot in human flesh ; and even should the bodies not be left exposed on the surface of the ground,

* Vol. xxv.

unless they are well protected by the depth or security of their last resting-places, they will be disinterred and devoured by the jackals. In regard to the burial of Major Horne, who was interred in the great jungle to the north of Oude, Mr. Russell says : " Before the service was closed in darkness, the yells of the jackals in the distance made us look to see the grave was deep."

In order to show the intense disgust with which Hindus as well as Europeans regard the unclean depredations of the jackal, we cannot do better than quote the words of a Hindu poet, noticed by Ward, who, in giving emblems to illustrate the different passions, thus portrays Disgust :—" A jackal devouring a dead body in a cemetery. First with his teeth he strips off the skin ; then devours the fleshy parts, which emit an offensive smell ; he next tears the flesh from the joints betwixt the toes and fingers ; his eyes become inflamed—the blood and putrid matter drop from his jaws," &c.





XI.

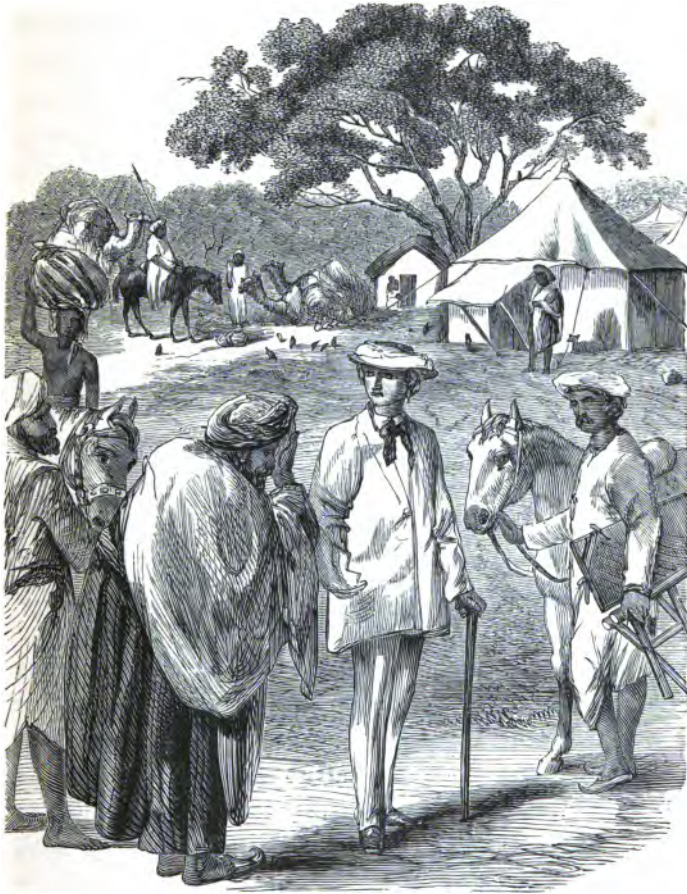
Eastern Exaggeration.

THE Bible, as an Eastern book, is remarkably free from exaggerated and hyperbolical expressions. As a revelation proceeding from the Omnipotent and Infinite Creator, we might expect to find many statements in it that our thoughts could not fathom ; but such a record should not "darken counsel by words without knowledge," or wrap up a paltry meaning in high-sounding and exaggerated phraseology. Nor does the Bible do so ; for in its style, as well as in its matter, it is emphatically the expression of truth and soberness. Hyperbole is a figure of speech comparatively rare in the Scriptures. There is only one short book, and that a book of poetry—the Song of Solomon—in which it is at all frequently to be found. The other instances of its use might easily be reckoned up. When the spies returned with an evil report from searching the land of Canaan, to deter the people from entering in to possess it, they spoke of "the cities as great and walled

up to heaven ;" and said in regard to the inhabitants that they were giants, and that they themselves "were in their own sight as grasshoppers" compared to them. In like manner the builders at Shinar are represented as saying : "Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven" (Gen. xi. 4). The prophet Isaiah, in speaking of Jehovah, says : "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance : behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing ; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity" (Isa. xl. 15-17).

In the New Testament, instances of hyperbole are still more rare than in the Old Testament. The most striking example is that which occurs at the end of the Gospel of St. John, where it is said : "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25).

Now, considering that the scenes referred to in the Bible are laid in Eastern countries, and that the writers of its various books were also natives of the East, it is remarkable to find that hyperbole occurs so rarely in its pages. And this circumstance will appear all the more striking if we take into account the fact that among Eastern peoples an exaggerated style of expression is not confined to panegyrics and adulatory



EASTERN EXAGGERATION.

addresses and inscriptions, but abounds also in common conversation, as well as in their literature and even in their formal documents. The French traveller Bernier

quotes several instances of that proneness to exaggeration which he could not help remarking among the Hindus. A Brahman whom he had engaged to serve his aga, endeavoured to propitiate his new master by comparing him to the greatest conquerors that ever were, and loaded him with a hundred gross and impertinent flatteries, quite seriously informing him, in conclusion,—“When you put your foot into the stirrup, my lord, and when you march on horseback in front of the cavalry, the earth trembleth under your feet, the eight elephants that hold it upon their heads not being able to support it.”

The artist has given in the engraving the sketch of a scene in which he himself was addressed in a similarly exaggerated style. He had on one occasion pitched his little encampment under the shade of a few trees, and near also to the only available well on the spot; and his servants had erected a rude fence around the tents and hut, to exclude strangers from the enclosure. Some time after, a native traveller arrived with a retinue of a few horses and camels, and coveting the position—or at least a part of it—which the artist had preoccupied, he approached, with many salaams, to ask permission to occupy it, addressing him at the same time by such titles as “Friend of the prisoner,” “Cherisher of the poor,” his “Budshah,” that is, “king;” and after running through his list of courtesies in that direction, he proceeded to inform my friend that at every preceding stage for the last fifty miles his fame had been the theme

of general conversation—although they had come, as it happened, in opposite directions.

When describing anything, the Hindus make use of the most extravagant hyperbole. "A splendid palace," says Mr. Ward, "they call the heaven of Vishnu; a heavy rain, the deluge; and a crowd is always swelled to myriads." The *Times'* special correspondent in India, during the suppression of the mutiny in 1858, entertaining doubts as to the accuracy with which the natives computed the number of men in an army, asked a talookdar of Oude, on one occasion, how many men there were then in the army of the Lord Sahib. The reply was, "The book has not yet been written which contains their number;" whereas the fact of the matter was, that there were at that time only a few thousands with Lord Clyde. Bishop Heber having gone on one occasion to visit some caves, inquired of a "gossain" or "Hindu hermit" if he knew anything of a "wonderful cave" (as it had been described to him) "on the other side of the hill." On which the old "gossain," with an air of much importance, said that "nobody had ever seen its end; that 2000 years ago a certain rajah had desired to explore it, and set out with 10,000 men, 100,000 torches, and 100,000 measures of oil, but that he could not succeed; and, if I understood him rightly, neither he nor his army ever found their way back again! These interminable caves are of frequent occurrence among the common people of every country, but the centenary and millesimal way in which the Hindus

express themselves put all European exaggeration to the blush. Judging from the appearance of the cave, and the size of the hill which contains it, I have no doubt," says the bishop, "that a single candle well managed would more than light a man to its end and back again."

Not only in their conversation and oral descriptions, but in their letters also, the Hindus show the same fondness for a florid and exaggerated style of expression. The following letters to a teacher and to a king may be quoted as specimens:—To a teacher,—“To Ubheesh-tudevu, the ferryman across the sea of this world, the teacher of the way of deliverance from sin, the sun-like remover of the great darkness springing from worldly attachment; the nut [alluding to a nut with which the Hindus purify water] which removes the impurity of the soul,—to thy feet I bow, the nails of which are like the horns of the half-moon.” To a king,—“To the great, the excellent, the prosperous, the illustrious King Krishnu-chundru-Ray, the nourisher of multitudes from many countries, the fragrance of whose fame has spread through the whole world; at whose feet many kings, adorned with refulgent crowns, bow; whose glory makes his enemies shrink as the sun does the roiruvu (the *Nymphica esculenta*); whose fame is pure as the queen of night; the priest of the perpetual sacrificial fire!”*

Even in formal documents the Hindus show the same love of high-flown and hyperbolical language. The following scarcely reads like an extract from a grant of

* Ward.

land, yet it is taken from a royal grant composed in Sanscrit, and engraved on a copper-plate, bearing date 23 B.C., which was found among the ruins of Moughyr.* “At Mood-go-gheeree (Moughyr), where is encamped his victorious army, across whose river a bridge of boats is constructed for a road which is mistaken for a chain of mountains; where immense herds of elephants like thick black clouds so darken the face of day that people think it is the period of the rains:—whither so many mighty chiefs of Jumboodweep (the habitable parts of the earth) resort to pay their respects, that the earth sinks beneath the weight of the feet of their attendants.”

An inscription recording another grant of some lands to Brahmans by King Tivara-Deva, runs thus:—“Glory to the illustrious Tivara-Deva—the nails of his feet are resplendent as a mirror with the reflected radiance emitted from the prostrate tiaras of innumerable princes; the tender palms of his hands are chafed by the tresses of those royal fortunes whom he has dragged captive; his merit in war is decorated with strings of pearl reddened by the blood starting from the brows of the elephants of his foes, cleft by the edge of his well-sharpened sword. He is as the destructive fire of ocean to his enemies conspiring against his invaluable treasures. His mild glory resembles that of the rising moon, and like the sea of milk he abounds with the most precious jewels.”†

The following is the inscription which Aurengzebe caused to be stamped on his coins:—“I, the King

* “Asiatic Researches.”

† Ibid.

Aurengzebe, conqueror of the world, have caused this money to be struck, resplendent as the sun."

Now, this same propensity to exaggeration which appears whenever they express their thoughts and feelings, is prominent in the sacred books of Eastern nations, and especially in the sacred books of the Hindus; and what a contrast in the same respect also does the New Testament present to the Talmudical writings of the Jews themselves, and more especially to the Talmud of Babylon, which is full of fables and ridiculous stories. The Rig-Veda, which is the oldest and most important of the four Vedas belonging to the Hindus, and the three other Vedas likewise, are one and all of them childish, monotonous, and obscure, not to say immoral, in their character. They contain instances of the grossest exaggeration, and the representations which they give of the gods are not unfrequently inconsistent and contradictory. The following extracts are taken from the translation of the Rig-Veda, by the late Professor Wilson:—

"Three thousand three hundred and thirty-nine divinities have worshipped Agni; they have sprinkled him with melted butter; they have spread for him the sacred grass; and have seated him upon it as their ministrant priest."

"The deities who sport in the spacious (firmament); those who are in the luminous sphere of heaven; the adorable U'mas, who come when worthily invoked; the horses, Agni, that are fit for thy car. With all these in one chariot, Agni, or in many (chariots), come to our

presence, for thy horses are able; bring the three and thirty divinities with their wives, for the sake of (the sacrificial) food, and exhilarate them (all with the Soma libation)."

"Priests, present the Soma libation to him (Indra) who with the adamantine (thunderbolt) demolished the hundred ancient cities of Sambara, and cast down the hundred thousand (descendants) of Varchin."

"To aid (the undertaking of) his friend, Agni, the friend (of Indra) has quickly consumed three hundred buffaloes; and Indra for the destruction of Vritra, has at once quaffed three vessels of Soma, offered by Manu."

But the Vedas may, by contrast, be regarded as sober and sensible by the side of the more numerous and more recent Puranas. The following extract from one of these Puranas—the Vishnu Purana—will set in a striking light the difference between such so-called sacred books, and what was written "by holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Brahma, according to the account given, desirous of raising up the earth from beneath the waters, assumes the form of a boar, and plunges into the ocean for that purpose; he is thus addressed:—

"Triumph, lord of lords supreme; Kesava, sovereign of the earth, the wielder of the mace, the shell, the discus and the sword, cause of production, destruction, and existence. Thou art, O god: there is no other supreme condition but thou. Thou art the person of sacrifice: for thy feet are the Vedas; thy tusks are the stake to

which the victim is bound ; in thy teeth are the offerings ; thy mouth is the altar ; thy tongue is the fire, and the hairs of thy body the sacrificial grass. Thine eyes, O omnipotent, are day and night : thy head is the seat of all the place of Brahma ; thy name is all the hymns of the Vedas ; thy nostrils are all oblations : O thou whose snout is the ladle of oblation ; whose deep voice is the chanting of the Soma Veda ; whose body is the hall of sacrifice ; whose joints are the different ceremonies ; and whose ears have the properties of both voluntary and obligatory rites ; do thou, who art eternal, who art in size a mountain, be propitious. The space between heaven and earth is occupied by thy body, O thou of unequalled glory, resplendent with the power of pervading the universe, O lord, for the benefit of all."

As a mere exhibition of intellectual degradation, this display is painful enough ; but how should we be affected by the recollection that these are specimens of what the Hindus treat as the chosen and venerated instructors of their souls in reference to the future life !





XII.

“To Sit with Me in my Throne.”

IN the epistles which the glorified Redeemer commanded the Apostle John to address to “the seven churches which are in Asia,” besides the counsel and rebuke which their several conditions call forth, there is in each letter a glorious reward held out to those who should overcome, to encourage them in fighting the good fight of faith. Of the seven Churches, the one that received the severest rebuke was Laodicea. However much the other Churches might be lacking in certain directions, there were, in the view of Him “who held the seven stars in his right hand,” at least some points in each of them to merit his commendation; but the Church of Laodicea meets with no single token of approval; its condition was, of all, the worst. It is worthy of notice, at the same time, that of all the rewards held out to the faithful in these Churches who should “overcome,” that of Laodicea is the highest and most glorious: “To him that overcometh will I grant

to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. iii. 21).

Now, to the English reader these words probably have merely conveyed the notion that some very great and distinguished honour was to be the portion of the finally victorious in the Church of Laodicea. The language would most likely be regarded as figurative, since the literal acceptation would not accord with our customs or ideas of things. And yet it is the literal acceptation that is no doubt the right one; furnishing only another instance of the need there is for an accurate acquaintance with the manners and customs of the peoples referred to in Scripture history, if we would avoid unconsciously misinterpreting Scripture, or, to say the least, missing its force.

In the Book of Job, Elihu, speaking of God's procedure, says: "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne" (Job xxxvi. 7). In these words we have the same custom alluded to as that in the passage just cited from the book of the Revelation; and in order fully to understand both passages, it is necessary to keep in view the Eastern custom to which they severally refer. In this country, and in most other countries of Europe, the throne is never occupied but by the monarch himself. Not only does its very construction—being of the form of a chair—set it apart for the sovereign's separate use, but it would further be at variance with our notions of propriety to see any one else share the throne with the sovereign. The same thing does not hold good, however, in regard



A MARK OF HONOUR.

to the people of Eastern countries. In India, for instance, the throne of the ruler is of the form of an ottoman or couch, rather than of a chair; and it is a com-

mon practice for the prince, when he desires to confer a notable mark of honour and favour upon any one at his court, to invite him to seat himself beside him on the *musnud* or throne.

Colonel Tod, of the late Honourable East India Company's Service, whilst travelling in the north-west of India, paid a visit to one of the rajahs in that district; and he mentions that on that occasion the "velvet cushion (forming the throne) was spread in a balcony projecting from the main hall of Bunera. Here the rajah's vassals were mustered, and he placed me by his side on the gadi." So on another occasion, when he visited the Prince of Deora, he found the vassals ranged in two lines ready to receive him; between which he passed, and was met by his highness, who had advanced to greet him, and who there insisted on his sharing the royal throne with him—an honour, however, which Colonel Tod courteously declined.

This, then, is what Elihu alludes to when he says of the righteous: "With kings are they on the throne" (Job xxxvi. 7); meaning that they are so honoured by their sovereign as to be selected from among the attendant courtiers to sit with him on his throne, while all else stand around. And what a distinguished honour was that held out to the members of the Church of Laodicea who should continue faithful unto death,—that they should be invited, in the supreme court of heaven, to sit with the triumphant Saviour by the Father's side!

When the Marquis of Hastings was Governor-General

of India, having on one occasion paid a visit to the Nawab of Oude, the Vizier not only obliged him to sit beside him on the musnud, but further, in order to show him the greatest possible distinction, he insisted that he should occupy his own place in the centre, whilst he himself took a position at the very extremity of the throne.

No one, whatever may be his rank, may venture to take his place on the musnud without a special invitation. When Lord Hastings, on the occasion just referred to, visited the Nawab, he was attended by a Persian prince of royal descent, who was residing in Lucknow on a pension from the East India Company. This prince, as soon as the Governor-General took his place on the musnud, proceeded to take his seat on it also, at the opposite extremity to that at which the Vizier himself was seated. Upon this the master of the ceremonies speedily informed him that it was impossible to allow of his sitting there; and other principal men of the court also went up to him and told him that his assuming such a station was wholly inadmissible. "The poor man," says Lord Hastings, "attempted to maintain his ground; when they roundly told him that if he did not descend immediately they would drag him from the seat. Whereupon he started forward, desired it should be remembered that he had never once since residing in Lucknow condescended to visit the Vizier, and that his being at that moment in his excellency's palace was only through his duty of attending on Lord Hastings."



XIII.

“A Lodge in a Garden.”—“To Sit as a Widow.”

IN the course of his lamentations over the ruin that had befallen Judah for her transgressions, Isaiah says: “And the daughter of Zion is left as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers” (Isa. i. 8). The prophet makes use in the same verse of other two figures; but all three express the same idea—that of loneliness, or isolation. “And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city” (Isa. i. 8). Of these three figures, the first and last so far explain themselves; but the force of the second is perhaps less obvious to the English reader. The practice of India, however, furnishes a striking illustration of the prophet’s words.

Mr. Forbes mentions, that in some parts of his district, whilst he was a collector in the service of the Honourable East India Company, the peasants used to plant large tracts of land, more especially in the unen-



ON WATCH.

closed parts, with melons, cucumbers, and gourds. This is done at the beginning of the rainy season; and in order to guard the produce from depredation, it is the

practice to build, on an artificial mound in the middle of the field, a rude hut of bamboos and thatch, sufficiently large to shelter a single person from the inclemency of the weather. In this hut is stationed, night and day, a watcher, to protect the produce from thieves—these being not only men, but more often monkeys, which assemble in large troops, and make serious havoc on the crop, if not speedily driven away. Whenever the sentinel perceives any depredator approaching, he gives the alarm to the nearest village, when the villagers issue forth and drive away the plunderers.

But however useful the office of the watcher may be to the villagers, who at that season live chiefly on the crop which it is his duty to guard, few situations can be more unpleasant than his in his solitary hut. During three or four months he is there exposed to storms of lightning and thunder, the intensity of which we have little conception of in this temperate climate of ours; and, further, has to abide the much more frequent visitations of tempestuous winds and drenching rains. How strikingly does this depict the sad plight into which the daughter of Zion had fallen for her sins, when she was left solitary, despoiled, and desolate, ever and anon visited by the fierce storms of God's wrath, which still swept over her, because the remnant left in her did not repent of their sins!

The prophet Jeremiah, in bewailing the desolation of Jerusalem, says: "How doth the city sit solitary, that was

full of people! how is she become as a widow!" (Lam. i. 1.) Now this last expression, which likens Jerusalem to a widow, acquires special significance and force in view of the custom of the East in regard to widows, and more especially in view of that of India. There are few sadder conditions to be found than that of the Hindu widow of the better class; and that not only on account of the absolute hardness of her lot in itself, but quite as much from its marked contrast to the position she occupied while her husband lived. During his life-time she was probably accustomed to a profusion of jewels and fine clothing, of which the Hindu women are particularly fond; but immediately after his death, she is for ever stripped of them all, and is never again permitted to wear any ornament, or to join in any joyous celebration. So completely is she deprived of every adornment, that even the *tahli*, the sacred token of her marriage, is cut from her neck, and her head is shaved. In the household in which she was formerly mistress, she is treated as a menial or slave, and is often watched by the jealous eyes of her husband's family, lest she should avoid any part of the rigid course of life to which she is doomed, and so fail of that respect which they deem due to his memory. So marked and painful, indeed, is the contrast between her married life and that condition to which she is inevitably subjected at his death, that it is no wonder that Hindu widows often, in former times, preferred to declare themselves *suttees*—that is, devoted to the flames along with the dead body of their husband—rather than

submit to a life-long course of reproach and toil. And the term *life-long* must be understood more nearly in its literal extent than we might perhaps be ready to suppose. For Hindu parents very frequently affiance their children to one another from the age of mere infants, and they are often actually married when they are only from four to five years old, although they live for a considerable number of years after that with their parents at home; but should the boy-husband die before he and his young wife have ever actually lived together, the wife is regarded as a widow, and is subjected to all the painful circumstances incident to that condition among the Hindus.

To such a sad position Babylon is represented by the prophet as self-sufficiently saying she should never be reduced, but should be "a lady for ever" (Isa. xlvii. 7). Yet, because of the multitude of her sorceries and enchantments, the prophet says: "These two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood" (Isa. xlvii. 9); and the same boast, to be followed by a similar doom, is recorded also against the mystical Babylon, spoken of in the Book of the Revelation of St. John.





XIV.

Our Lord Blessing Little Children.

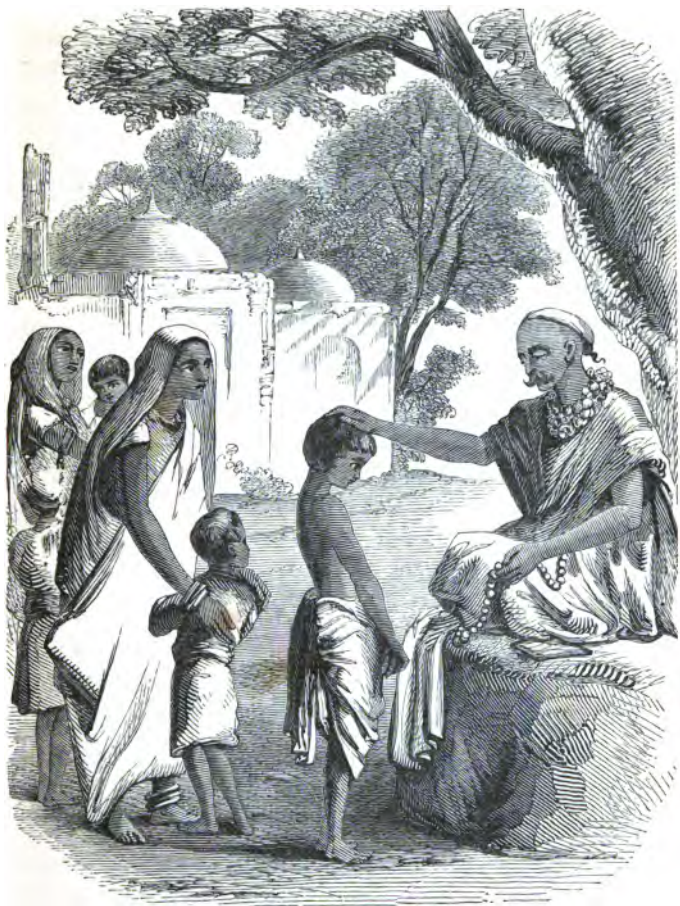
NOWHERE does a prophet meet with a readier or more enthusiastic reception than among Eastern nations. Any one in those countries who can produce tolerable evidence to the possession of miraculous powers, is sure to attract a large number of followers eager to witness his displays of power. This propensity, so prominent in the character of Eastern peoples generally, may account to some extent for the vast crowds of persons that often gathered about our Lord. The evangelists continually speak of multitudes attending his steps, not allowing him out of their sight, following him into the wilderness, remaining with him day after day, and even treading each other down in their eagerness to get near him (Luke xii. 1). But a very small part of these crowds, however, had any real sympathy with our Lord's character or teachings; although they would, doubtless, pay him the greatest

outward deference, or even the most superstitious reverence, as a distinguished prophet.

On one occasion, we are told, certain parents brought their children to him to receive his blessing. The disciples would have ordered them away, but Jesus interfered, and approved of their errand, and took the children in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. (Mark x. 13-16 ; Matt. xx. 20, 21.)

In India we find a custom parallel to this, where it is the practice for parents to bring their children to their religious teachers that they may receive their blessing. These teachers, or spiritual guides, are termed *gooroo*s, and are held in the highest estimation ; and every Hindu is understood to possess such a spiritual guide. One of their sacred books speaks thus of the duties of the disciple, and of the relation which his gooroo holds to him :—"If the disciple consider his gooroo as a mere man, and not the same as his guardian deity, he will sink into misery. The disciple must promote the welfare of his gooroo by all his actions ; if he injure him, in another birth he will become a worm feeding on ordure. A disciple must honour his gooroo's son and grandson as he honours the gooroo. Whether the spiritual guide be learned or ignorant, a vile or a holy person, a disciple has no other resource, no other way to happiness, but his gooroo."

So highly are these spiritual guides esteemed, that Mr. Ward mentions that he has sometimes heard Hindus speak with comparative contempt of all other ways of



GOOROO BLESSING CHILDREN.

salvation. The spiritual guide is, in the estimation of his disciple, literally a god, and divine honours are paid to him. Whenever he approaches, the disciple prostrates

himself in the dust at his feet, and never sits in his presence without leave, and relies entirely upon his blessing for future happiness.

When a gooroo pays a visit to the house of a disciple, the whole family prostrate themselves before him, and the spiritual guide puts his right foot on the heads of the prostrate family. One of the family washes his feet, and all afterwards drink some of the dirty water with which his feet have been washed: the water which remains is preserved. Others present to him flowers, or anoint his body with oil, or bathe him by pouring water on his head. After they have all bathed, they again worship the gooroo's feet by presenting flowers, sweetmeats, and other articles, and repeat incantations. On the same occasion, the disciple takes his child to the gooroo to receive his benediction, placing the infant before the gooroo, and soliciting his blessing, which he gives in some such words as, "Live long," "Be learned," or, "Be rich." The gooroo is afterwards entertained; and of the little that he leaves, every one seizes a morsel with eagerness. When he takes his departure, he is dismissed with the best presents that his disciple's ability permits him to offer.

These gooroos are generally persons who have obtained a character for sanctity; but they are not always Brahmans. The power which they exercise is both spiritual and temporal, and consists in a supervision over certain castes in all matters respecting religion and caste regulations. They have power over the members of the caste to in-

flict punishment in case of transgression—such as pouring cow-dung and water on the head of the offender, or by fine or whipping, for smaller offences; and by excommunication from the caste in the case of weightier charges: and this power is never questioned.

A Hindu chooses his own gooroo, but the office often descends from father to son. Princes have private goorooes who always attend them. These they style their chaplains; and they are wont to present themselves before them daily to receive their blessing and *prasadam*, or present, which consists of some article of no value in itself, but which is held by the disciple to be very precious.

The goorooes are of different degrees of rank; and they all subsist on the tribute which they levy on their disciples. This, in the case of the great goorooes, is so oppressive, that they cannot remain very long even in the neighbourhood of great towns, £30 or £40 a day being as little as can well be offered them. These great goorooes have each a sort of diocese or circuit which they travel over every few years, and their main object in doing so is to levy this tribute. On such occasions they appear in great state; and not unfrequently travel by night to avoid contact with their European and Moslem conquerors, who would not show them the respect to which they think themselves entitled. They are most rigorous in exacting the tribute from their disciples; and in the event of its being refused, there is no indignity to which they will not subject the contumacious disciple

until it is forthcoming. Should all other means fail, they pronounce upon him their curse ; and so greatly do the Hindus dread the malediction of their gooroo, that this seldom fails to bring the perverse disciple to terms. In some cases the disciple's non-compliance results from his actual inability to meet the demand, and Dubois states that occasionally the gooroo will then oblige the disciple to surrender his wife to satisfy his claim.

If the gooroo's curse is so much dreaded by the Hindu, his *asirvadam*, or blessing, is, on the other hand, correspondingly prized, as having the power to remit all sin.

The Evangelist Matthew mentions that as the women, who had gone early in the morning to visit our Lord's sepulchre, were returning to the city after seeing the angels who had told them of his resurrection, Jesus himself met them, "and they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him" (Matt. xxviii. 9). This conduct on the part of the women describes exactly the way in which the Hindu disciple approaches his gooroo. No greater reverence can be offered to a god than is offered by the disciple to the gooroo, and oftentimes their divinities are not honoured with one so profound. When the disciple meets his gooroo, he makes before him the *sashtangam*, as it is termed, or prostration of the eight members ; in offering which he throws himself flat on the ground, lays hold of the feet of his gooroo, and licks the dust from the sole of his foot.



XV.

Eastern Inns.

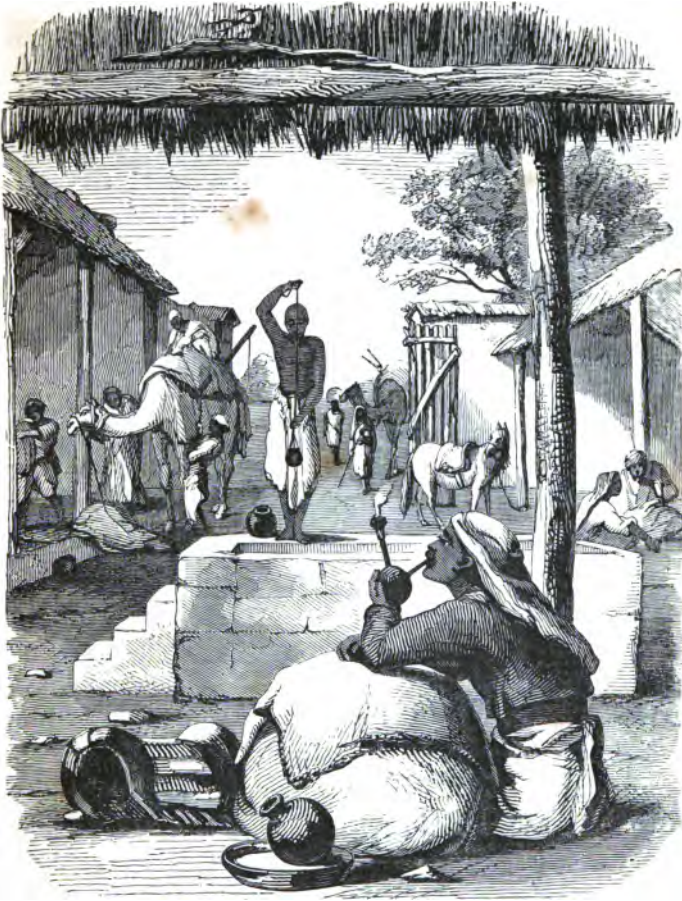
THE Bible contains several references to inns; but in none of these references is an inn alluded to in our sense of the word. Eastern countries knew nothing of inns after the English fashion; and when such places are mentioned in the Scriptures, the reference is to buildings similar to what in India they term *serais*, *choultries*, &c. These buildings are of very various size and pretensions, but entirely resemble each other in their main features. Bishop Heber records a visit which he paid to one at Futtehpoor in Northern India, which was of the better class, although, at the time of his visit, in a ruinous condition. It consisted of a quadrangle, with two gates opposite to each other, and a verandah or cloister running all round the interior of the quadrangle, having a row of small fireplaces against the walls, of sufficient size to heat the earthen pots which are generally used in India to cook in. The floor of this cloister was coated over with lime

cement, and was raised about a foot above the level of the courtyard ; whilst behind it there was a range of small, dark apartments, which descended again to about the level of the quadrangle on the other side of the cloister.

Most of the Indian serais and choultries are, however, of ruder construction than this—consisting generally of a wall enclosing a quadrangle, with a tiled pent-house roof running round the inside, and sometimes with one extending round the outside as well. The inside verandah is divided into small compartments—in all cases entirely destitute of furniture—which serve for the accommodation of the travellers, whilst their cattle occupy the courtyard or open part of the quadrangle. In the south of India a tree may sometimes be seen with a raised terrace surrounding it, for the purpose of affording a still more temporary shelter to travellers than even these serais.

For the accommodation obtained in these buildings travellers have nothing to pay ; or, if they have, it is the merest trifle to the person who keeps the place clean. Very generally there is a Brahman or fakir connected with the building to supply travellers with fuel, earthen pots for their cooking, and sometimes with milk.

Many of these serais and choultries had in former times considerable endowments settled upon them by the benevolence of the founder, to provide food for the travellers and fodder for their cattle free of charge ; but these endowments have, for the most part, been alien-



A SERAI.

ated. In many places, however, food is still given gratuitously to Brahmans and religious mendicants.

Dr. Buchanan refers to a commodious building of the
(588)

kind in the south of India which had formerly been built by a benevolent person, and had then recently been repaired and placed under the charge of a Brahman, who received from Government four rupees a month, and had seven cows allowed him, that he might serve all travellers with milk gratuitously. The Brahman, however, thinking he had no special object to gain by attending to the cattle, only drew from them as much milk as served his own purpose; and occasionally he would share this supply with a rich traveller—expecting to receive for it, however, in return what was five times its value.

In India these buildings owe their existence very often to the benevolence of the prince or some wealthy person. They are also occasionally built in fulfilment of a vow—it being considered a very meritorious act to erect such a place of shelter for travellers.

Now, the inns referred to in the Scriptures were places of the kind just described. They appear to have existed from the earliest times, at least in Egypt and its neighbourhood, as the sons of Jacob, and, at a later date, Moses, are spoken of as halting at an inn in that locality (Gen. xlii. 27; xliii. 21; Exod. iv. 24). In Palestine, and the countries lying to the east of Palestine, these serais or inns do not appear to have existed at so early a date—a fact which may be gathered from the narrative of the Levite in the Book of Judges (Judges xix. 15); and Job, who lived in those parts, says: "The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my

doors to the traveller" (Job xxxi. 32)—accommodation which there would have been no occasion to offer, if public accommodation had been provided for travellers.

In the parable of the good Samaritan, which, although a parable, gives us none the less a picture of real life as found at that date, the host referred to has nothing in common with "mine host" of the well-furnished and comfortable Old English hostelry, but corresponds to the Brahman or the fakir already mentioned as usually to be found in charge of the Indian choultries and serais. The wounded traveller entrusted to his care would be placed in one of the compartments of the inn, and would receive daily, until his recovery, the simple fare which the keeper of an Eastern inn usually has to dispose of to travellers. (Luke x. 34.)

In the East every traveller cooks his own meal—merely obtaining from the keeper of the building the simple materials which compose it; but "the host" of the parable would most likely have engaged to do the cooking for the wounded man in return for the two denarii (about one shilling and threepence sterling) left by the good Samaritan.

In such a building as has been described, our blessed Lord appears to have been born. His parents, in obedience to the decree issued by the Emperor Augustus for a general registration or enrolment, had repaired to their native city Bethlehem for the purpose of being enrolled. But owing to the large number of families that had arrived at Bethlehem, doubtless for the same purpose,

Joseph and Mary were unable to find accommodation in "the inn" or serai, as all the compartments were occupied; and accordingly they seem to have found a temporary resting-place in the open quadrangle in the centre amongst the cattle. There it was that Jesus was born; and one of the mangers or troughs from which the oxen and asses were feeding was taken for his cradle. What a lowly bed was that for the "Son of Heaven's eternal King" on the first night of his earthly sojourn! There lay the God-man slumbering peacefully as the Babe of Bethlehem, with no roof to hide him from those very stars that he had made, and which now in their courses watched his humble bed; whilst over the spot too floated with eager gaze the multitude of the heavenly host, ere they sped on their way to announce to the simple shepherds the glad tidings of "the Saviour born to them that day in the city of David," whom they should find lying in a manger; and there they found him. But before the Eastern magi arrived, it would appear that Joseph and Mary had found the shelter of a house.





XVI.

Midnight Marriage Procession.

THE parable of the Ten Virgins at the marriage procession is one of the most impressive of all our Lord's parables. But the circumstances referred to in it are so unlike anything to be found in our customs, that we may have regarded the picture as a fanciful one. Such, however, is not the fact; it is drawn from real life.

Our Lord likens the kingdom of heaven to "ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom" (Matt. xxv. 1). Now, with this difference, that they would be men and not women who would bear the *massauls*, or torches, on such an occasion, the same thing may be seen in India, as that referred to above. It is the custom in that country to celebrate a marriage with all the pomp and show that the circumstances of the parties will admit of. Thousands of pounds sterling are sometimes expended by wealthy parents upon such an occasion, in getting up large processions, in scattering

money amongst the assembled crowd, and in feasting and giving presents to immense numbers of persons. A rajah will sometimes spend £10,000 in celebrating the marriage of his son or daughter; and an instance has occurred of a rajah having distributed £20,000, in five days, amongst the crowd who attended at the celebration of the marriage of his daughter to a neighbouring rajah; whilst the whole expense of the celebration exceeded six lacs of rupees, or £60,000.

The procession on such an occasion is made up of friends and attendants; and in the case of a rajah, troops often swell the numbers to the size of a little army of many thousands of persons. In the line of the procession are to be seen richly-caparisoned elephants, camels, and led horses; palanquins, musicians, troops of dancing-girls, and all the paraphernalia of Eastern pomp and magnificence.

The ceremonial takes place at night, when the streets are illuminated by hundreds of massauls borne in the procession. These torches consist of a little copper mould or socket at the end of a pole, into which pieces of rags are thrust, and kept continually moistened with oil from a vessel which the torch-bearer carries in his other hand.

Our Lord says in the parable, respecting the virgins: "And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps" (Matt. xxv. 2-4). The foolish virgins



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are represented as having neglected to fill with oil the vessel which the torch-bearer always carries ; and hence they had no oil with which to replenish their lamps, or

rather their torches, as the Greek word had better have been rendered.

And "while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept" (Matt. xxv. 5). In connection with a marriage, processions oftentimes pass through the town for several nights in succession; but on the night of the marriage, the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride in the evening, frequently about midnight, and when his approach is announced, a party proceeds to meet him with torches from the house of the bride, after the manner referred to in the parable:—

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Matt. xxv. 6–12).

The whole description given in this parable so closely corresponds to a scene witnessed by Mr. Ward when in India, that we cannot do better than quote his words in illustration. "At a marriage, the procession of which," he says, "I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from

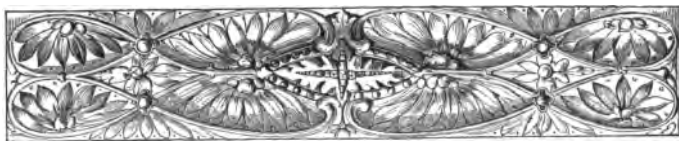
a distance, and the bride lived in Serampore; to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him' (Matt. xxv. 6). All the persons employed now filled their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession: some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared; but it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon the mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut and guarded by Sepoys. I and others expostulated with the door-keepers, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment—'And the door was shut' (Matt. xxv. 10). I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment."

"Blessed," says the angel in the Apocalypse, "are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9); and what, on the other hand, will it be, to be cast out into the outer darkness,

where is weeping and gnashing of teeth! (Matt. viii. 12).

Amongst the Israelites, a period of about a year usually elapsed between the time of the arrangement of the nuptials and the actual celebration of the marriage, and the father was wont to form the agreement on behalf of his sons and daughters. In the case of the Hindus, also, it is the father who disposes of his sons and daughters in marriage; and that very frequently whilst they are yet mere children, through an arrangement with some other parent to effect a union between the families when his child shall have grown up. Although many years should elapse before the marriage is able actually to be celebrated, the engagement is considered as definite and binding as if it had been at once consummated; so that if the young man die before the day of his marriage, his plighted wife is treated as a widow, although she may never have enjoyed a single day of her husband's society. This, as may well be supposed, is a great hardship for the Hindu women to be subjected to; and it is all the more oppressive, inasmuch as a widow in India is not allowed to marry again.

Hindu women eagerly desire marriage, since it is looked on as a reproach to remain permanently single. The same state of feeling existed among the Jews, and accordingly it is enumerated by the Psalmist as one of the evils that overtook the nation because of their departure from Jehovah: "Their maidens were not given to marriage" (Ps. lxxviii. 63).



XVII.

Women Fetching Water from the Well.

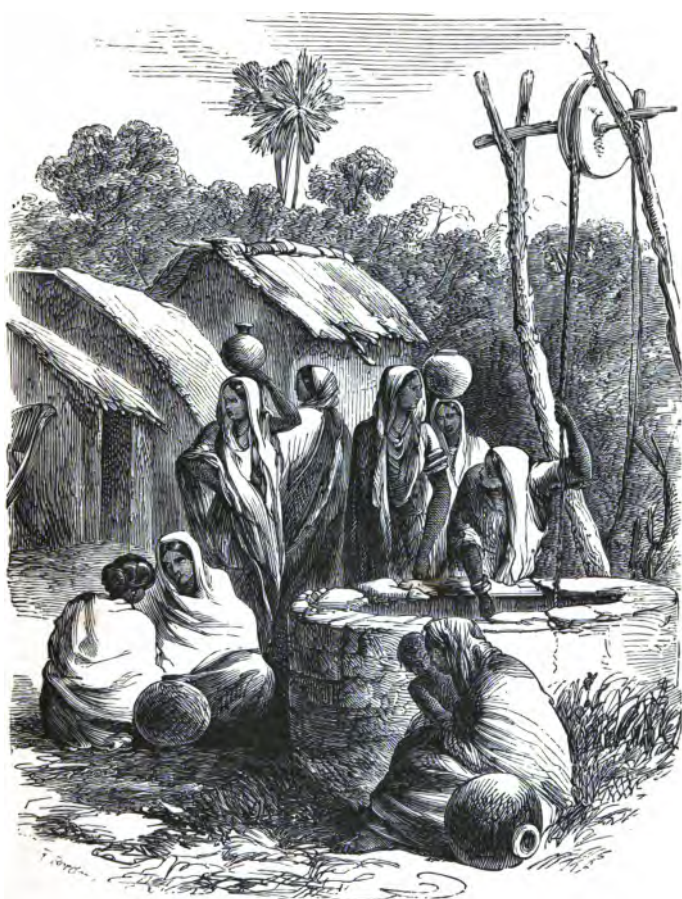
SOME of the most interesting Biblical characters are referred to, at certain periods of their history, in connection with wells, and women drawing water. What delightful pictures of primitive and pastoral manners are afforded us in the meeting of Abraham's servant with Rebekah; of Jacob with Rachel, his cousin and future wife; and of Moses with the daughters of Jethro, the priest of Midian. These scenes present us with some of the earliest and most charming instances of Eastern courtesy and hospitality. Eliezer, the confidential steward of Abraham, was sent by his master on the important mission of obtaining a wife for his son Isaac. Taking ten of his master's camels, he set out from Palestine across the Arabian desert, to reach Mesopotamia, the country in which his master's relatives resided, from amongst whom alone he was permitted to take a wife for his master's son. After completing the desert journey, and as he drew near to

the city of Nahor, whither he was bound, instead of proceeding directly into the city, "he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water" (Gen. xxiv. 11). From his acquaintance with the customs of the country, he knew that he would have a better opportunity of furthering his errand, if he waited by the well until the damsels came out to draw water, than he could have if he entered into the town. It was the God of Abraham, his master, however, who alone made the plan, which had been first reverentially submitted to him in prayer, so completely successful.

Dr. Thomson, the Syrian missionary, mentions that an almost precisely similar scene may be witnessed at the wells of Syria at the present day. If the thirsty traveller asks water of one of the damsels whom he finds at the well, he will receive, in part at least, precisely the same reply that Abraham's servant obtained: "Drink, my lord." This response to his request he himself has often received; but he adds a circumstance, which much mars the beauty of the parallel custom as compared with the original. "I have never found," he says, "any young lady so generous as this fair daughter of Bethuel. She drew for all his camels, and for nothing; while I have often found it difficult to get my horse watered for money." *

Besides the early Bible references to the custom of women drawing water already mentioned, we are told

* "The Land and the Book," p. 593.



WOMEN AT THE WELL.

also how Saul and his servant, when approaching the city of Samuel, found, as they went up the hill to it, "young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto

them, Is the seer here?" (1 Sam. ix. 11). Then what an interesting and touching narrative is that, in which St. John records our Lord's interview at the well with the woman of Samaria! Our Lord asks water of the woman, but at first she seemed inclined to refuse it; yet how willingly did he dispense to her "that living water" of which he spoke, and which, from his description of it, she seemed so anxious to obtain.

The custom of women going to the wells to draw water prevails in Palestine down to the present day. "In the neighbourhood of Bethlehem," says a recent traveller, "we saw a band of young girls going to a well with their pitchers on their shoulders, who appeared among the most beautiful of their sex we met in the East. They had slight and elegant figures, a native grace of mien and air, added to which the tasteful drapery of their light simple attire, the dark tresses, that fell in wild luxuriance over their necks and shoulders, braided with small gold coins, while a zone of the same brilliant materials adorned their high expanded foreheads, the music of their silver anklets, their long pendent ear-rings, cast an inexpressible charm around these lovely Arab maidens."

The same custom has existed in India from the earliest times, and prevails there at the present day, just as it does in Palestine. The custom has been noticed as corresponding to the Biblical narratives by many of those who have been travellers or residents in India. "When I saw the Brahman women of distinction," says

Mr. Forbes, "drawing water at the village wells, and tending their cattle to the lakes and rivers, they recalled the transactions of the patriarchal days. The Hindu damsels of the present day live in as much simplicity as those formerly in Mesopotamia; they still descend to the wells, and continue to pour the water into an adjacent trough for the convenience of the cattle." A writer in the "*Asiatic Journal*" incidentally records on the same subject: "The women carry water in goblets on their heads with much grace and elegance: their appearance was picturesque, and reminded me of the Biblical descriptions."

In the large towns, the Hindu women of the better classes are wont to be secluded, often with the greatest jealousy, and therefore are not to be seen at the wells. Judging from the more ancient Hindu literature, however, there can be no doubt that the women of Hindustan formerly enjoyed far more liberty than they have latterly done; as in the later times the Hindus have learned from their Mohammedan masters jealously to seclude their women. Women of the poorer classes, however, are observable at all times repairing to the wells to draw water; and in the rural districts women of distinction likewise may be seen following the same primitive custom.

It is mentioned in the Scripture narrative that Rebekah carried her pitcher on her shoulder (Gen. xxiv. 45). Now, in India, women of the higher castes are wont to carry their pitchers of water on their shoulder

likewise ; whilst those of lower caste carry them on their head,—and sometimes several of these pitchers at once, which they balance with much skill and grace.

The well is the place of meeting and gossip for the village or town, and there travellers on their journey are wont to rest. It quite accords with the Indian custom for a traveller to rest at noon by the well, as our Lord is represented as doing, more especially if there is shade, as well as water, to be procured there. Even when the streets of the town are deserted in the heat of the day, persons may generally be found about the well.

The woman of Samaria, we are told, in answer to our Lord's request, put forward an objection to her giving our Lord water to drink, on the ground that he was a Jew, and she a woman of Samaria. In India, if a person of low caste were to ask for water at the well from a woman of high caste, he would most likely be refused ; or if his request were granted, the woman would pour water into some vessel and retire from it, that he might thereby help himself, without coming in contact with her. When an Englishman comes upon women at a well or tank, they generally take to flight in a body.

The drawing of water is considered in the East a work for woman only to perform ; and even in towns the women of the humbler classes do in fact fetch all the water required for domestic purposes. For men to draw water was reckoned amongst the Jews a very

humble and menial employment. Hence we read that when it was discovered that the Gibeonites had deceived Joshua and the elders of Israel, although their lives were spared, because of the covenant entered into with them, yet as a punishment they were adjudged to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. "And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God" (Josh. ix. 22, 23).

The same feeling is not entertained in India, in reference to the men engaged in drawing and fetching water. There are many purposes for which a supply of water would be necessary in towns beyond mere domestic requirements; and the "*bheestie*" (a word which signifies "heaven") or water-carrier is employed to fetch it; but the "*bheestie*" is of a high caste, and is usually a very hard working as well as a very necessary personage.





XVIII.

Anointing with Oil.

ON the morning that followed that first and memorable night which Jacob passed as a fugitive from the parental home, we are told that he took a stone, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it; for, said he, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. xxviii. 16, 17). Full twenty years afterwards, Jacob came again to the same spot, and on that occasion "he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother" (Gen. xxxv. 7). Once more did God appear there to Jacob, and at the same time changed his name to Israel, and blessed him, telling him that a company of nations and kings should spring from him, and that the land promised to his ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, should belong to him and to his seed. Where-

upon we are told that a second time "Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon" (Gen. xxxv. 14). Now we are not to suppose that Jacob erected these pillars as objects of worship; still the fact of his pouring oil upon them seems to justify us in concluding that he regarded them as something more than mere memorials to commemorate the events that had occurred. We find mention made of two other occasions on which Jacob erected pillars, but these latter pillars were simply intended as memorials, and there is no intimation given of any oil, or of a drink-offering, being poured upon them (Gen. xxxi. 52; xxxv. 20). Although, therefore, Jacob did not erect them as objects of worship, he would probably regard them as possessing a measure of sacredness from their connection with the spot where Jehovah had appeared to him; and it is easy to see how such a practice would degenerate amongst the ignorant and superstitious into absolute idolatry.

That a custom of the kind referred to did lead to such a result as that we have supposed, appears more than likely from the fact, that the same Hebrew word (מַצֵּבָה) which is used for the pillars which Jacob anointed, is used to signify also an image of an idol. Of Jehoram, the son of Ahab, king of Israel, it is said: "And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made" (2 Kings iii. 2); the

same Hebrew word being here used for "image" as is used in Gen. xxviii. 18 for "pillar." The word is similarly employed to express an idolatrous image in 2 Kings x. 26; xviii. 4; xxiii. 14; and it may be observed that in Micah v. 13, this word מַצִּבּוֹתָיִךְ is translated "thy standing images," and is distinguished from פְּסִלֶיךָ, "thy graven images," referred to in the same passage. "Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands." The "standing images," as distinguished from the "graven images," may refer to rude uncut pillars, as distinguished from the statues graven after the likeness of the idol; and in Lev. xxvi. 1, these "standing images" are separately enumerated in the prohibition there recorded against every form of idolatrous worship. "Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God."

In various parts of India uncarved pillars and blocks of stone have been wont to be set up, and certain acts of worship performed before them. They are also anointed with oil and other unguents, after the manner that Jacob anointed the pillar at Bethel. "Exclusive of the temple for public worship," says Forbes, "in most of the Guzerat villages is a small sacred burr or pipal tree, under which is the figure of a cow, the lingam, one or two of the deities, or a vase containing a plant of the tulsee, or sweet basil, growing on the top of the altar. Some-



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times the object of worship is only a plain stone, or a block of black or white marble, on which flowery sacrifices are daily offered by the villagers, either with or

without the presence of a Brahman. With the other sacrifices, the Hindus often mingle a small quantity of oil of sandal, mogrees, and odoriferous plants; more common unguents are rubbed on the stone. The custom of anointing stones with oil, and converting them into altars, is very ancient; as Jacob set up a pillar and poured oil on it, so is it practised at this day, on many a shapeless stone, throughout Hindustan.* These rude pillars, set up under trees, are of very frequent occurrence throughout India, and they generally present a black and shining appearance, from the abundance of oil and unguents that is lavished upon them.

It is well known that in ancient times perfumed oils were much used in the East for anointing the head and other parts of the body. The practice still exists, although to a less extent, as in many cases different kinds of perfumed waters are now employed instead. One of the purposes for which oil was made use of in anointing, was to show respect and honour to the individual receiving it. It is with this intention that oil is poured on the images of the gods, and the pillars already referred to, both of which are to be found in great numbers beneath trees and groves along the highways of India. In like manner, when an Indian rajah receives a party of guests, he passes round the company, anointing them with perfumed oil, or sprinkling perfumed waters on the head and hands. When special honour is intended to be paid to any individual, a more copious libation is made in his

* "Oriental Memoirs," vol. iii., p. 15.

case; and our artist has frequently been present as a guest at such entertainments.

A similar practice prevailed amongst the Israelites, and was probably derived by them from the Egyptians; as the custom is mentioned by Wilkinson as existing in Egypt from the earliest times. This custom may be referred to in Ps. xlv. 7; and is so still more directly in the words of the rebuke which our Lord addressed to his entertainer, Simon the Pharisee, for his neglect of that act of courtesy towards himself: "My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment" (Luke vii. 46). It was customary for the Jews, however, to anoint the head, and sometimes the face, at home, for health and pleasure, as well as on the occasion of an entertainment. This practice may not strike us as very agreeable, but in that warmer climate it is thought to be conducive to health and cleanliness, as it serves, for one thing, to close the pores of the skin, and so prevents immoderate perspiration, which has a weakening effect.

In India, the natives, especially those of Bengal, are accustomed to anoint not only the head and face, but also the whole body; so that, after his ablutions are concluded, a Hindu may be seen shining from head to foot with mustard or cocoa-nut oil.

When a Jew was in mourning or in trouble, he abstained from washing and anointing himself; and so does the Hindu. During the illness of Bathsheba's son, King David, we are told, fasted and lay upon the earth; but,

contrary to the expectation of his servants, he ceased his mourning when he learned that the child was dead, and then he "arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself" (2 Sam. xii. 20).

But anointing with oil was further employed as a sign of the consecration of persons and even of things to a holy use. When Aaron was to be hallowed to minister to the Lord in the priest's office, amongst other ceremonies to be employed, the following injunction was given to Moses: "Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him" (Exod. xxix. 7). And not only were Aaron and his sons set apart by means of anointing, but the vessels of the sanctuary were consecrated in a similar manner. The ceremony of anointing was also used at the inauguration of David and Solomon, and some of the rest of the kings; although it was not observed at every accession. In allusion to the fact of our blessed Lord's being set apart by the Father to accomplish the work of our redemption, his distinguishing name is that of "the Anointed," represented in the Old Testament by "Messiah," and in the New Testament by "Christ."





XIX.

Idol Processions.

FROM all the temples of India processions are wont to start at least once in the year. On such occasions the gods are carried in state, either on men's shoulders, or in a niche on a lofty and cumbrous car sometimes reaching to the height of fifty feet from the ground. The Rath or Car of Juggernaut is upwards of forty-three feet high, and it moves on sixteen wheels, which are from six to seven feet in diameter. These idol cars are generally of a pyramidal form, and are decorated, or, more truly, disfigured, by carving of the most obscene description. The idol processions are usually very numerously attended, and are, as a rule, confused and noisy in the extreme, owing to the vast collection of discordant instruments made use of on the occasion, added to the shouts, or rather yells, of the excited multitudes in attendance, who are all engaged in playing the fool, each after his own particular fashion.

The following account of the procession of the celebrated idol of Juggernaut is taken from the narrative of a gentleman who witnessed the procession for four successive years :—At the Rath Jatra, the four images in the temple of Juggernaut are indulged with a trip to the god's country-house at Goondicha Nour, a mile and a half distant. They are fetched from their throne in the temple to a niche each in its own car ; but not in a formal or reverent manner : on the contrary, they are pulled out by the neck, and jolted along in the most unceremonious way by the priests. But as soon as the beloved images appear outside the temple-gates, they are welcomed by the deluded multitudes with loud shouts of "Jye Jagannath !" or "Victory to Juggernaut !" and the hideous objects are forthwith raised to their elevated positions on the cars. These celebrated idols are about six feet in height, and of the rudest description. They consist of wood carved into a rough resemblance to the human head, the remainder of the figure being of the shape of a pedestal. The idols are painted severally of a white, yellow, and black colour, with horribly grim and distorted countenances ; and they are surmounted by a head-dress of party-coloured cloths, shaped something like a helmet. Two of the idols, regarded as brothers, have arms projecting horizontally from the ears ; the sister is entirely destitute of any such subsidiary members ; whilst gold or gilded feet, hands, and ears are brought forth from a box to put upon the great idol, and a scarlet scarf is further



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arranged round the lower part of the pedestal. The image is then formally worshipped by the Rajah of Khurda, after which a troop of the villagers who live

near the temple advance through the crowd with music—shouting and dancing meanwhile—to assume their peculiar duty and privilege of dragging the cars of the god. As soon as these have given the initiative by laying hold of the cables attached to the cars, the multitudes set up universally a vast shouting and uproar, the confused din of which is greatly increased by thousands of discordant instruments which are called into play; and they then join the villagers in dragging onwards the idol-cars two at a time. Owing to their vast size, these cars are of immense weight; and after creaking along heavily for a few yards a pause ensues, during which the charioteers of the god usually advance to the front of a platform connected with the car, and perform some frantic gestures, and recite a fable or a series of jokes, both of which performances are often indescribably indecent. The rate at which the procession advances depends on various contingencies—such as, the condition of the roads, the directness of the route chosen, the number and zeal of the pilgrims, and the will of the priests, who are said to be able to stop the wheels, despite the utmost efforts of the crowd to advance. The journey is generally completed in two or three days—by which time, however, the ardour of a great part of the multitude has quite died out; and they may accordingly be seen slinking off in troops, leaving the huge cars to get back as they best can. This nowadays they would often quite fail to do but for the help of certain villages, whose inhabitants enjoy their lands rent free on condi-

tion of their performing this service for the god. But even they require the exercise of authority to secure for the deity the benefit of their services.

In former times many fanatics were accustomed to immolate themselves by falling before the wheels of the idol's ponderous car. But for the four years during which the author of the narrative witnessed the procession, only three cases occurred of such fanatical suicide; and in regard to one of these, he remarks that it was doubtful whether it was not accidental; whilst the victims in the other two cases had long been afflicted with some excruciating malady, and chose that mode of suicide instead of one of those other modes so common among the lower orders of Hindus. This festival has latterly, however, declined very much in importance.

In the south of India, special inns or serais, called *mandapam*, are built to accommodate the gods whilst on procession. But when they are not occupied by idols, they are employed for a far more useful purpose—namely, to give shelter to travellers on their journey.

Idols are carried in procession, however, not only at stated seasons of the year, but also on the appearance of any pestilence, as part of the propitiation offered to the gods to avert the threatened visitation. When, for instance, cholera, one of the most terrible scourges of India, approaches the borders of the Mahrattas, the inhabitants of the district hold a meeting, and make a collection to defray the expense of sacrifices to propitiate the destroying deity; in addition to which processions

are held both by night and by day, in which the symbols of the deities are prominently displayed, and the images of the gods are carried about on decorated cars, or else borne on men's shoulders.

It is customary for the Hindus to blacken with oil and melted butter the cars on which the gods are borne in procession; and this dingy appearance is admired as an indication of the frequency with which libations of oil and ghee are poured upon them.

The temples of the gods are still more filthy than these cars. They are often more like ovens than temples, from their low and confined proportions. A deleterious and disgusting smell moreover fills the place, proceeding from decaying flowers, burning lamps, and libations of oil and butter; and if, says Dubois, we add to these horrors the rank perspiration from a multitude squeezed together in such a place, we may form some idea of the stench which exhales from the shrines of the deities of India. The idols themselves, owing to their hideous aspect and dirty condition, are quite worthy of such a sanctuary. They generally appear in some frightful or absurd posture; but it is difficult to perceive in them any definite feature, owing to the dark hue which they contract from the continual libations of oil and ghee poured upon them.

Now, similar scenes to the idol processions of India just described must have been witnessed in the land of Palestine; and to these the prophets occasionally make allusion—as Isaiah does, when, speaking of an idol god,

he says : " They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place " (Isa. xlv. 7)—the exact counterpart of what is to be seen in India.

Such an inveterate liking have the Hindus for these processions, that the Roman Catholic missionaries have in some cases found themselves obliged to tolerate them in their converts—the only difference being the substitution of a saint for a god. These processions, says Dubois, are always performed in the night-time, and, to me at least, have been at all times a source of shame. The statue of the saint is placed on a car decorated with garlands, flowers, and other ornaments, and is dragged slowly along by the multitude, who at the same time shout, beat hundreds of tom-toms, play on flutes, and sometimes let off fireworks. The congregation meanwhile surround the car all in confusion,—some of them dancing or playing with small sticks or naked swords, some wrestling, some playing the fool, but all shouting or conversing with each other, without any one exhibiting the least sign of respect or devotion.





XX.

The Idol-Maker.

MAN will worship; and to most men it seems a necessity to see the object of their adoration. A purely spiritual being is too abstract to satisfy the wants of untutored, unchristianized men. Even a large part of so-called Christendom, indeed, prefers to interpose some material object on which their senses may rest, and aid them in their ascent to the Deity, rather than repose directly on the unseen Father of spirits. It is no wonder, then, that heathens should have their gods many and lords many, graven by art and man's device. A material object, more or less graven by human hands, has in all parts of the world been treated by men as a god, or the residence of a god, and consequently worshipped; and every nation has made different gods of its own. Nature, too, or her various parts and forces, have been in all ages worshipped, either directly or when personified. The beneficent powers of nature have been worshipped out of gratitude, as helpful

to man ; the destructive out of fear, to avert their displeasure.

The three principal deities of the Hindus appear to have been originally personifications of the earth, water, and fire : Brahma, the creator, being a personification of the earth ; Vishnu, the preserver, of water ; and Siva, the destroyer, of fire. The Hindus were not content, however, merely to conceive of these as persons, but gave them a material embodiment to assist their conceptions of them ; and hence arose the pursuit of idol-making, which forms one of the most certain and lucrative of the trades of Calcutta. Before the festival of the goddess Doorga, in particular, the idol-makers of Calcutta are busy in the preparation of thousands of images. There are certain streets in the city appropriated to idol-makers ; and before the season referred to, if one happens to pass along any of these streets, he finds on all sides of him images in every stage of progress. Piles of arms, legs, and bodies of future gods, lie around him ; whilst there is an unceasing noise of the tools of the workmen engaged in the manufacture of images.

The idols to which reference is at present made are *temporary idols*, which are only made use of for a single festival, and at its conclusion are generally thrown into the Ganges. These temporary idols are made of a bamboo framework, covered over with clay and cow-dung, and vary in size from a few inches to twenty feet.

As the idol comes from the shop of the maker, it is not, however, regarded as a god fit to be worshipped,

but requires to be formally consecrated by a priest before it becomes the residence of the divinity. This ceremony is performed by a Brahman, who provides himself with all the needful accessories—such as leaves from a sacred tree and other things—and then proceeds to touch the breast, cheeks, eyes, and forehead of the image with the two forefingers of his right hand, uttering at the same time an audible prayer to the effect: "Let the spirit of Doorga descend and take possession of this image." And it is believed that through the efficacy of the "muntras," or prayers of the priest, the goddess is really brought down to take possession of the image; from which she is usually dismissed again by the Brahman at the conclusion of the "Doorga pooja."

The temporary images, made of bamboo, clay, and other materials, may be purchased at from two to eight rupees (from four to sixteen shillings) each, and upwards, if plain; but if painted, the image will cost probably half as much more. In the year 1839 it was computed that, in the celebration of the Doorga pooja, or festival, there were expended by the natives of Calcutta and its suburbs, on entertainments, idols, and other accessories, 25 lacs of rupees, or about £250,000.

In regard to the Israelites, it is well known to every Bible-reader how stringently they were forbidden to make idols under any pretext. Not only were they required to have nothing to do with the gods of the nations whom they should dispossess, and to burn those idols that fell into their hands, but it was added: "Thou shalt



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not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou

bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it" (Deut. vii. 25, 26).

Notwithstanding all the prohibitions announced, however, and despite all the threatenings annexed to the worship of idols, there was no sin to which the Israelite nation was more prone than the sin of idolatry. The prophecies of *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel* especially abound with references to the manufacture and worship of idols; and the former prophet speaks of the land as "full of idols" (*Isa. ii. 8*). They appear to have been made principally of gold and silver, but also of wood and stone, and of wood covered over with plates of the precious metals.

The permanent idols of the Hindus are made of all these materials, as well as of most of the other metals, and sometimes of glass. *Bajee Row*, the *Peishwa* of the *Mahrattas*, is said to have had an image of one of the gods made of gold, with diamonds for the eyes, which was valued at £50,000.

Besides the idols to be met with in the temples, the Hindus have household gods, which they worship at home. The author of "*Sketches of the Hindus*" gives a description of the performance of "*pooja*" to the household gods. The idol with its throne, and all the vessels used in the worship of the gods, are kept wrapped up in a secure place; and when the *pooja* is to be performed, the worshippers, the room, and the idol itself, are all washed with water. After purifying the room, a new mat or carpet, set apart for the purpose, is spread upon the floor, and the throne of the idol is placed upon it,

which is sometimes made of gold or silver, but usually of wood, richly carved and gilt. A number of vessels are also placed upon the carpet or mat, as also a bell, a conch-shell to blow on, and a censer filled with benzoin, sugar, and other ingredients, which are kept constantly burning. Flowers are strewed upon the mat, and vessels are placed before the idol containing rice, fruits, sweet-meats, and cow's milk. The worshippers employ themselves in repeating prayers and verses in honour of the god before whose image they are worshipping. The ceremony is presided over by a Brahman, who occasionally rings the bell, blows on the conch-shell, and further sets a mark on the idol and all the worshippers. When the pooja is concluded, the fruit and other articles that were spread out before the god are then divided amongst the worshippers.

The Scriptures refer, at a very early period, to such household gods : as when Rachel stole her father Laban's gods ; and, at a later date, the " man Micah " is said to have " had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest " (Judges xvii. 5). Such teraphim are treated by the Hindus as heirlooms, which descend with the family property from father to son ; and it will scarcely be necessary to add, after what has been stated, that the country is literally full of idols of one kind or another.

The prophet Isaiah represents God's people as saying to him : " But now, O Lord, thou art our father ; we are the clay, and thou our potter ; and we all are the

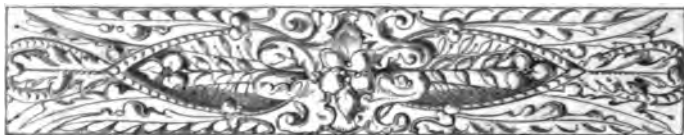
work of thy hand" (Isa. lxiv. 8). And the same impressive figure is made use of by other prophets to express the altogether helpless and passive condition of creatures in the hands of their Creator. Now, owing to the fact of the potters being the principal god-makers amongst the Hindus, this most striking similitude of the Old Testament prophets becomes, according to their ignorant and monstrous notions, exactly reversed, for man is then no longer the clay in God's hands as the potter; but the god is the clay, to be moulded and fashioned in the hands of the man!

The temples of the gods in India would not only, as a matter of necessity, shock every moral and religious feeling of our nature in witnessing them, but, viewed merely as places of public resort, they are literally disgusting. The buildings are generally dark, low, and dirty, and rendered abominably close and fetid by the rank smell of melted butter, decaying flowers, and the perspiration arising from the crowds that squeeze into the small apartment containing the image. The attendant Brahmans on their part evince scarcely any respect for the divinity at whose shrine they officiate, but listlessly lounge about the place, and not unfrequently choose the very temple as the scene of their quarrels and fights.

On the part of the Brahmans, religion is manifestly treated very much as a trade, in which their interest is proportionately enlisted according as it proves remunerative or otherwise. Lord Hastings mentions his observing, near Hurdwar, a little temple which, curiously enough,

had an English flag flying on it. The muth, or temple, was conspicuously situated on the top of a hill; and an old priestess had officiated at the shrine for several years, when some fakirs came to know that she obtained a good deal of money, either out of curiosity or devotion, from those who visited the spot. They accordingly forcibly deposed her; whereupon she complained to the English magistrate of the district, who, considering that her right of preoccupation entitled her to the advantages of the situation, replaced her, and gave instructions to the native police-officers to see her righted, in case of future intrusion. It was owing to this circumstance that she placed an English flag on the top of her temple, which could not therefore be viewed as in any way connected with, in the sense of sanctioning, the idolatry of the place, but merely as a symbol of the triumph of justice; still, it is not without a feeling of reluctance that we see the English flag associated, in the most distant way, with a worship that is an outrage on the claims of the one universal Lord of the whole earth, and who is at the same time emphatically Britain's glory and defence.



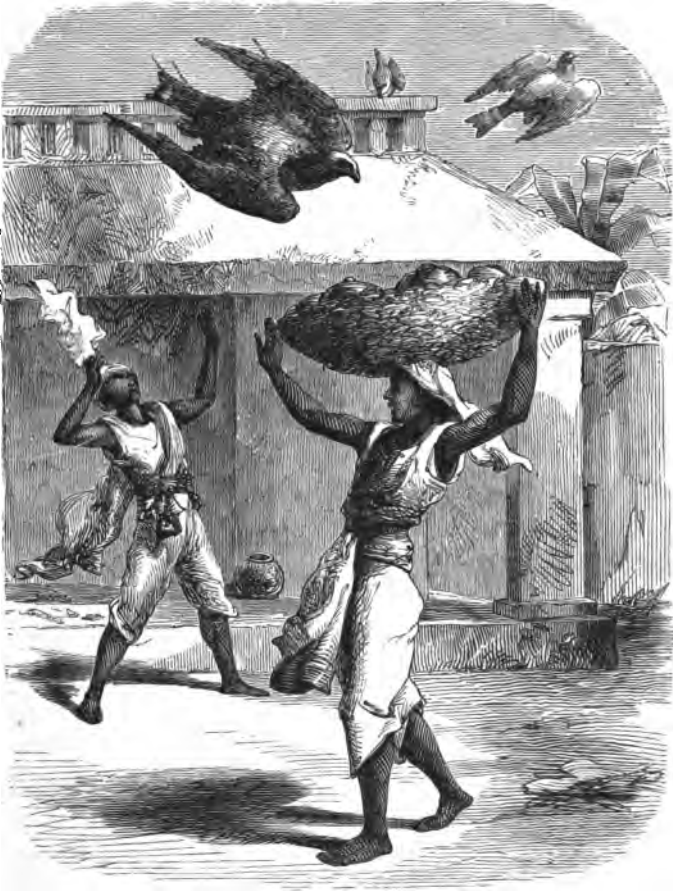


XXI.

The Birds and the Bake-meats.

THE SUDDEN RISE OF EASTERN FAVOURITES.

WHEN the chief baker of Pharaoh heard in the prison how favourably Joseph had interpreted the chief butler's dream, he was thereby encouraged to tell his own dream to Joseph. "I also," said he, "was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head : and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bake-meats for Pharaoh ; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head" (Gen. xl. 16, 17). Now in dreams we do not in general expect to find much congruity of ideas or great consistency of detail. And this dream of the chief baker may have appeared to us to be no more true to fact than dreams are usually wont to be ; but such is not the case. It may strike us as very improbable that "the bake-meats" should be eaten by the birds whilst carried on the head of the baker. In this country it



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would be so, but such an occurrence would not be at all improbable in the East. The incident represented in the engraving may serve to illustrate the point.

In India, it is the common practice, at least in the houses of the resident Europeans, to have the kitchen or "cooking-house" in a building detached from the dwelling-house. In consequence of this arrangement, the different viands when cooked have to be carried a short distance in the open air, and sometimes they are conveyed uncovered. One day various cooked provisions were being thus carried in a basket on the head across "the compound" (that is, the walled enclosure in which the house of a European resident generally stands), when a Brahman kite made a swoop at the viands, and bore off a roast fowl in its talons. The kite soon found its prey rather too hot, however, and accordingly dropped it; but ere it reached the ground, it made a swoop at it again, and now, when a little cooler, succeeded in carrying it off. This is not a solitary instance, for similar occurrences are by no means uncommon.

In Calcutta, where the incident happened, these Brahman kites are both very numerous and very daring. A friend of the writer has seen one of them suddenly swoop down, and carry off the skull-cap from the head of a native; and after flying up with it some distance into the air, then drop it, meanwhile uttering a shrill scream, as if in amusement at the sport it had caused. These facts show that there is no want of verisimilitude in the incident as seen by the chief baker in his dream, when "the birds did eat the bake-meats out of the basket on his head."

The future life of Joseph, the interpreter of this

dream of the chief baker, reminds us here of a phase of social life which, although strange to us, is sufficiently common in the East. From about the lowest position—that of an offender in prison—we find Joseph suddenly raised to the very highest place of dignity next that of the throne itself. Very similar to that of Joseph was the case of Daniel also, who was suddenly elevated by Nebuchadnezzar to a high position for the interpretation of a dream. In like manner King Ahasuerus raised Mordecai, the Jew, from obscurity to the place of honour next himself.

Instances of like sudden and lofty promotion, have constantly occurred at the courts of the various rulers of India. Under an absolute government, where there is no check on the will or even caprice of the monarch, a fortunate individual may be suddenly raised to the highest rank for some service or gratification, by which he may have won the approval of the sovereign; whereas, on the other hand, a similarly rapid fall may be experienced, in consequence of some offence, whether accidental or intended, that may have served to arouse the displeasure of the despot.

As Joseph's case was that of a sudden elevation, we may take the following event, which occurred in India at a comparatively recent date, as illustrative of the Scripture narratives. "We were riding," writes a member of a late king of Oude's household, "a little behind the carriage, the body-guard following us. Occasionally one or the other rode up to the carriage,

and conversed, hat in hand, with his majesty. The tutor was riding by the side of the carriage at the moment, when a half-naked native, of tall stature and fine muscular development, emerged from the side of the road, and began dancing and chanting a wild melody. The king turned to regard him. One or two troopers would have driven the fellow away; but his majesty called out to them to desist, and at the same time ordered his carriage to stop. It was the merest caprice that made him do so; at another time he would probably have laughed heartily at the troopers chasing the vagrant.

“Peeroo, for that was the wild fellow’s name, was delighted with the attention he attracted to himself. The whole cavalcade was stopped whilst he went on with his uncouth dancing, and the nasal twanging of an irregular song, which he had composed himself. Some happily-turned compliment or ingenious piece of flattery in the song arrested the king’s attention. He was pleased, heard the fellow to the end, and ordered a native attendant to give him five gold mohurs—a sum equal to £8. ‘I will hear you again at the palace to-morrow,’ said the king, as he drove on; whilst Peeroo assured him in reply, that the favour of ‘the Asylum of the Universe’ was to him what the heat of the sun was to the palm-tree.

“Peeroo was a poet in his own wild way; and, unlike poets of old, had little bashfulness. He made his appearance next day at the palace, and offered to sing a

new song ; but the king would hear nothing but the same one that had first charmed him. Day after day did the lucky Peeroo make his appearance at the palace ; and day after day did the king hear the same melody, finding apparently ever new delight in it. Largess was showered on the head of the fortunate minstrel, and he began to be somebody in Lucknow. Before a month had passed away, the nawab, imitating his master, gave presents to Peeroo ; the commander-in-chief did the same ; Rajah Buktawir Singh, the head of the police, followed suit ;—and money flowed fast into the open palm of Peeroo. There was every probability that the adventurer would one day stand high amongst the nobles of Oude, and people bowed to him as he passed.

“ ‘But surely this could not last,’ exclaims the reader. One would suppose not, certainly ; but it did last notwithstanding. Apartments were prepared for Peeroo in the palace. His formerly nearly naked form was clothed in purple and fine linen. The nawab and the commander-in-chief and Rajah Buktawir Singh, the three leading natives of the court, spoke to him as to an equal ; and right jauntily did Peeroo carry his fine clothes, and his new honours. When was there a poet yet who thought he got his deserts ? At first daily, then weekly, then monthly, and, in fine, rarely did Peeroo sing his songs before his majesty ; but he still continued a favourite. When I left Lucknow—about eighteen months after we had first seen him emerging from the side of the road, like a wild man of the

woods, and in danger of being chased like a wild beast by the troopers—Peeroo was a noble, and a noble of note, in the court of Lucknow. I have forgotten the title which he received ; but he was made a 'Singh' of course, to which I doubt not 'Rajah' was subsequently prefixed."





XXII.

Living under Trees.

WE find frequent reference made in the Scriptures to trees being used in many respects as we use houses. Thus of Deborah the prophetess it is said: "She judged Israel at that time. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges iv. 4, 5). So in respect to Saul we are told: "When Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men that were with him, (now Saul abode in Gibeah under a tree in Ramah, having his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him;) then Saul said unto his servants," &c. (1 Sam. xxii. 6, 7). In the palmy days of Solomon, the state of Israel is thus described: "And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon" (1 Kings iv. 25).

Now, from these passages it is not necessary to under-

stand that the parties therein referred to literally lived permanently beneath the trees; but we must equally, on the other hand, guard against supposing that nothing more is implied than that for a few hours at a time, and perhaps for only a few days together, the persons mentioned remained under the tree. We in this country are wont to connect the idea of dampness with a position under a tree. It is only during a few months of the year that remaining under a tree would in our climate be at all desirable; and even then, one would scarcely choose to remain at rest in that position for more than an hour at a time, if indeed so long. But the case is quite different in the "Land of the Bible," and in many of the more sunny lands of the East. In India, for instance, to which for the present we are confining our attention, life under a tree would, during a great part of the year, be a thing not only quite possible, but even pleasant. In India it is not at all an uncommon thing for a fakir or other fanatic to live with no other shelter than the shadow of a tree during a great part of the year. So when we are told that "Deborah dwelt under the palm tree between Ramah and Beth-el," the probability is that she resided there through many months of the year at least; doubtless under the protection of a tent by night, but at other times covered solely by the shade of the tree.

The facts stated respecting Deborah bring to our recollection another circumstance of Indian life. It is said that while Deborah dwelt beneath the palm-tree,



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"the children of Israel came up to her for judgment."
 It is very likely that this palm-tree, under which Deborah dwelt, and to which the people came for judgment,

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was near some village on Mount Ephraim. Whether this was the case or not, it is interesting to find that, in India, near to every considerable village there is a tree, to which the head-man of the village is accustomed to repair, in order to hear and decide all the minor cases of dispute that arise in the village. This tree, which is generally a banyan or a peepul tree, serves the purpose of county-court and town-hall to the village; and our artist has often seen such village courts assembled beneath the tree.

In the warm countries of the East, people live far more in the open air than we do. It is the regular custom with a large part of the natives of India to eat and sleep in the open air. There are not a few, indeed, that have no house at all to live in; and at night they are accustomed to wrap themselves up in their "cummerbund"—a garment which during the day they use indifferently as a turban or a scarf round the waist—and after wrapping this around them, they stretch themselves by the side of the road, or under the shelter of the eaves or walls, looking exactly like so many corpses. The author of "Delhi, or Six Years in India," says: "Our evening drives through the city always divert me. The whole population is out of doors, either sleeping, or smoking, or roasting and fanning kabobs (mutton chops)." And in another place it is said: "Coming home the other night, we saw six or eight Kulis lying flat on their backs in the road, with their heads close to our wheels, fanning themselves to sleep! Almost the whole

population sleep out of doors. They just draw in a foot, which is sticking out beyond their charpais (bedsteads) as our buggy passes."

When the three men came to visit Abraham in the plains of Mamre, it is said respecting the patriarch: "When he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree." After getting ready for their entertainment, it is said: "And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat" (Gen. xviii. 2-4, 8). In like manner, when the angel visited Gideon, to make known to him that he was to be the deliverer of Israel, Gideon entreated the angel to accept his hospitality; and we are told: 'And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it" (Judges vi. 19).

In India, it is a very common sight, when on a journey, to see the natives eating under the trees, just after the manner related in the passages above quoted. The banyan-tree is especially prized as a shelter, owing both to its vast extent and the grateful shade which its dense foliage affords. Some of these trees cover an immense

extent of surface. There is one in particular, which covers an entire island in the Nerbudda river. It is well known that the banyan sends down shoots from its branches, which root themselves in the soil, and thus form subordinate stems, which act as props to support its wide-spreading arms. The banyan-tree referred to in the Nerbudda is said to possess nearly three thousand smaller stems, and three hundred and fifty larger ones; and the distance round the principal stems is rather more than the third of a mile. Seven thousand persons might find shelter beneath this single tree. Bishop Heber mentions he was told it could accommodate ten thousand horsemen. Some such tree as this, if not indeed this very tree, seeing it has been celebrated since the Portuguese visited India, suggested the lines to Milton:—

“ They both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,
But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Deccan, spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother-tree, a pillared shade
High over-arched, and echoing walks between.
There oft the Indian huntsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade.”

Besides the uses of trees in the East already mentioned, we find them employed to a certain extent as temples to present worship beneath. Moses, by the command of Jehovah, specially cautioned the Israelites against one of the characteristic sins of the Canaanites, charging them that they should not erect idols and present worship under trees, as the inhabitants of the land had done:

"Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree" (Deut. xii. 2). Notwithstanding this explicit prohibition, the Israelites did act according to the practice of these nations; for we are told of the people of Judah, who only therein imitated the people of Israel, "They also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree" (1 Kings xiv. 23). Against the upholders of these idolatrous practices, Jehovah, by means of the prophet Ezekiel denounces a terrible and appropriate punishment: "Then shall ye know that I am the Lord, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols" (Ezek. vi. 13).

These idolatrous customs are, unfortunately, but too fully illustrated by existing practices in India. It is a very common sight in India to witness idols erected beneath trees, and the people engaged in performing "pooja," or worship, before them. And not only do they worship idols beneath the trees, but it is likewise very common to worship the trees themselves, or at least the peepul-tree. Our artist has often seen them thus engaged. Just after performing his morning ablutions, a Hindu may frequently be observed beneath one of these trees, with a "lotah," or drinking-vessel, in his hand,

containing, if possible, some of the water of the Ganges. Part of this water he pours on the roots of the tree, and then placing the palms of his hands together, he raises them before his forehead, as he bows before the tree ; thus performing his "pooja" to it.





XXIII.

Taking off the Shoes, as a Token of Respect.

IT is remarkable in what different ways the same sentiment is expressed in different parts of the world. Amongst Western nations generally, one of the principal ways of showing respect is by uncovering the head; whereas amongst Eastern nations the same sentiment is given expression to by uncovering the feet. When a European enters a church, in token of reverence he uncovers his head; but when a Mohammedan enters a mosque, or other sacred place, he takes off his slippers. In the recently published journal of a resident in India, mention is made of a visit to the palace at Agra, where it is said: "We saw a small praying-place for the inferior women-servants, and lastly a miniature *moti masjid* (a mosque) of white marble, with three domes, for the great ladies or *begums*. Here one of our attendants was sharply reprimanded by a brother Mussulman for daring to enter the house of prayer with

his shoes on. They expect nothing better from us, but condemn it in each other." As a proof how rigidly the custom is observed in India, even up to the present time, it may be mentioned, that during the suppression of the mutiny in Oude, by the army under Lord Clyde, it was noticed that the rajah of Amethie, when he came in and surrendered, did not take off his slippers before entering the commissioner's tent. "I went into Barrow's tent," says the narrator, "where the rajah was seated, and it was observed that he had not taken off his slippers on crossing the threshold." .

In connection with this, the words will doubtless have occurred to every Bible-reader, which were addressed to Moses, when he drew near the manifested presence of Jehovah on Mount Horeb: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exod. iii. 5). In like manner also the words addressed to Joshua: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy" (Josh. v. 15). Amongst the Jews it was customary to remove the sandals as a sign of humiliation and grief. Thus when David left Jerusalem through dread of his rebellious son Absalom, it is said: "And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot" (2 Sam. xv. 30). So when the prophet Ezekiel is told not to take to himself any of the signs of mourning, although "the desire of his eyes was taken away with a stroke," it is said: "Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind



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the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet" (Ezek. xxiv. 17).

The practice of removing the sandals or shoes as a sign

of respect and reverence is made use of in the East, not only in sacred places, but also whenever any one enters the presence of the sovereign, or of one who is much his superior in rank ; or one whom he wishes to treat in that light. Our artist, whilst travelling in India, was taking tea under the shade of a tree, which is often preferred to the shelter of a tent, when a native approached to speak to him, and in doing so left his shoes on the ground at some distance off, and came on barefoot, in token of respect. When natives of India pay a visit, they always leave their shoes at the door of the house.

The difference of custom in the East and West is well illustrated in the narrative of "The Private Life of an Eastern King." "The favour and intimacy," it is said, "which the European members of the household (of the King of Oude) enjoyed, were by no means pleasing to the higher native nobility of Oude,—nay, were altogether displeasing. This was natural enough ; for the nawab, or prime minister, and the commander of the forces, and "the general" at the head of the police, Rajah Buktawir Singh by name, were all secondary beings when the barber (the king's favourite) was by.

"'It is not right or proper for these gentlemen,' urged the nawab, 'to enter into the presence with their shoes and boots on. We never do. Your majesty is somewhat over-condescending in allowing it. Believe me, your majesty's august father, of happy memory, Ghazi-u-deen Hyder, the great and magnificent, would never have suffered it.'

"The king was taken aback for a moment at this bold speech from one usually so humble and so pliant; but Rooshun-u-Dowlah had screwed his courage to the speaking-point, and was not to be answered with a look.

"'Am I a greater man than the King of England, nawab?' asked his majesty.

"'Your majesty is the greatest king in India,—greater than the Emperor of Delhi. May the Asylum of the World live a thousand years!' Such was the wily courtier's evasive answer.

"'Rooshun-u-Dowlah,' said the king, 'am I a greater man than the King of England?'

"'It is not for your majesty's servant to say that any one is greater than his lord.'

"'Listen to me, nawab; and you, general, listen to me. The King of England is my master, and these gentlemen would go into his presence with their shoes on; shall they not come into mine, then? Do they come before me with their hats on? Answer me, your excellency.'

"'They do not, your majesty.'

"'No; that is *their* way of showing respect. *They* take off their hats, and *you* take off your shoes. But, come now, let us have a bargain. Wallah! but I will get them to take off their shoes and leave them without, as you do, if you will take off your turban and leave it without, as they do.'

"The nawab never said a word more on the subject. He was silenced. The loss of the turban is the greatest

of indignities amongst Mussulmans. 'May my father's head be uncovered if I do it,' is no uncommon asseveration with them when urged to perform what they will not, or when anxious to show that the commission of an action is far from their thoughts."





XXIV.

The Giving of Presents in the East.



VERY characteristic Eastern custom is the giving of presents. It is true that amongst ourselves the offering of presents is a sufficiently common occurrence ; but the significance of the custom in the two cases is very different. When we bestow a gift, it is generally looked on as a voluntary expression of kindness towards him who receives it ; whereas, amongst many Eastern nations the offering of presents is a formal piece of etiquette. In many parts of the East, to appear without a present on certain occasions would be taken, not as a great unkindness, but a great insult. In our own country, presents are generally presented to equals in rank, or by a superior to one beneath him in station ; but in the East it is the inferior who presents the gift to his superior.

There are very many references to this custom in the Scriptures. To present a present to the king was looked on as part of the duty of a subject, and as an expression

of allegiance to his sovereign. When Saul was chosen by lot to be the first King of Israel, it is said of those who were discontented with the appointment: "But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents" (1 Sam. x. 27). When the Israelites were to be released from their bondage to Eglon the king of Moab, Ehud, their deliverer, embraced the opportunity of presenting a present from the people to assassinate the king. When David conquered the Moabites in after-times, we are told: "So the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts" (2 Sam. viii. 2). In regard to the dominions of Solomon, it is said: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life" (1 Kings iv. 21). Not to refer to other instances, which might be quoted, we may cite a passage which shows the effect of a tributary sovereign's neglecting to observe this custom towards his superior lord. "Against him [Hoshea, king of Israel] came up Shalmaneser, king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison" (2 Kings xvii. 3, 4). Keeping this import of the custom in view, it is instructive to notice what is said by the Psalmist respecting

the conduct of the kings of the earth towards Jehovah : "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee" (Ps. lxxiii. 29). In reference to the future universal sway of Messiah, it is predicted : "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents : the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts" (Ps. lxxii. 10). From the same point of view, how interesting is the conduct of the Eastern magi on their visit to the infant Saviour at Bethlehem, when it is said they "fell down, and worshipped him : and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts ; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. ii. 11), —thus paying homage to him who was destined to be, not only the King of the Jews, but whose dominion was to extend "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

Presents, in addition to being expressions of subjection and allegiance, were wont to be offered as marks of deference and respect towards a superior. Thus Abraham presented tithes of all he had, when Melchizedek met him returning from his successful expedition against the kings. So when the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, to tell him that he should be the instrument of delivering the people of Israel from the Midianites, Gideon said : "If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee" (Judges vi. 17, 18).

Presents were also offered with a view to procure favour and acceptance for the offerer. When Jacob was obliged, through stern necessity, to send Benjamin down to Egypt, we are told he said: "If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds" (Gen. xliii. 11). When Saul's servant advised his master to inquire of the prophet Samuel where they should find the asses they were in search of, Saul urges as an objection to their doing so: "But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God: what have we?" (1 Sam. ix. 7). In the days of Solomon, we are told, "all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year" (1 Kings x. 24, 25).

Now these Biblical customs are abundantly illustrated by those of India, even up to the present day. A recent writer on India, who had a good opportunity of knowing the state of the case, says: "No one must approach an Eastern monarch empty-handed. A "nuzzur," or present, must always be offered, and is offered, by every one, even at the ordinary levees, the king returning another of greater value subsequently." As an illustration of this custom, we may refer to the account which Bishop



HINDU ASCETIC.

French traveller Bernier thus describes these ascetics as he saw them: "There is a vast number and great variety of fakires, derviches, or religious heathens of the

India. I have often met in the field, especially upon the lands of the Rajas, whole squadrons of these fakires altogether naked—dreadful to behold! Some held their arms lifted up perpetually above their heads; others had their terrible hair hanging about them down to the middle of their legs, or else they had wreathed it about their head. Some had a kind of Hercules' club in their hand; others had dry and stiff tiger-skins over their shoulders. I saw them pass thus quite naked, without any shame, through the midst of a great borough. I admired how the women brought them alms with much devotion, taking them for very holy men, much wiser and better than others. Other fakires, who, out of a particular vow, stood for seven or eight days upright upon their legs—which thereupon swelled as big as their thighs—without sitting or lying down, or without reposing themselves otherwise than by leaning some hours of the night upon a stretched cord: others, who stood for whole hours upon their hands without wavering,—the head down and the feet upward,—and so many other sorts of postures so constrained and so difficult, that we have no tumbler able to imitate them; and all this, it seems, upon the account of religion, of which yet there appears not the least shadow in it."

As to the motives that induce these devotees to assume the character and undergo the hardships that they do, these are of various kinds. Some of them indulge the belief that, by their self-imposed tortures, they shall better their condition in a future state, either by their

spirits escaping degrading transmigrations, or, better still, by being exempted from being born again on earth, through immediate absorption into the essence of Siva. In other cases, the reputation for sanctity, and the consequent influence they shall secure, has determined their choice ; whilst a large proportion of them are simply idle rogues and impostors, who are too indolent to undertake regular work, and prefer living in the odour of sanctity on what they can extort by appeals to the credulity and fears of the people. Some of these devotees acquire great influence with the multitude, and are approached and consulted by them with the greatest veneration.

Bishop Heber thus alludes in his journal to one out of many of these devotees that he observed in the course of his tour through various districts of India : " Near our halting-place, which was a very pleasant one, was a little open shed occupied by a Hindu ascetic, with a double quantity of dung and chalk on his face, who was singing in a plaintive, monotonous tone to a little knot of peasants, who seemed to regard him with great veneration."

Sir Thomas Roe relates a more striking instance, which he witnessed at the court of the Great Mogul, at which he was English ambassador, of the influence which these ascetics sometimes obtain. " The 18th of this month of December," he says, " I visited the king. I found him sitting on his throne, and a beggar at his feet, a poor, silly old man, all ragged and patched, with a young rogue attending him. The country abounds in this sort

of professed poor, holy men, and they are held in great veneration ; and in works of mortification and voluntary sufferings they outdo all that ever has been pretended, either by heretics or idolaters. This miserable wretch, clothed in rags, crowned with feathers, covered with ashes, his majesty talked with about an hour so familiarly, and with such seeming kindness, that it must needs argue a humility not found easily among kings. The beggar sat, which the king's son dares not do ; he gave the king a present, a cake mixed with ashes, burned on the coals, and made by himself of coarse grain, which the king willingly accepted, broke a bit and ate it, which a nice person could scarce have done ; then he took the clout and wrapped it up and put it into the poor man's bosom ; and sent for a hundred rupees, and with his own hand poured them into the poor man's lap, and gathered up for him what fell besides. When his collation, or banquet and drink, came, whatsoever he took to eat he broke and gave the beggar half ; and rising after many strange humiliations and charities, the old wretch not being nimble, he took him up in his arms, though no cleanly body durst have touched him, embracing him, and three times laying his hand on his heart, and calling him father, left him and all of us ; and me in admiration to see such virtue in a heathen prince, which I mention with emulation and sorrow, that we, having the true vine, should bring forth the bastard stock of grapes ; wishing either our Christian princes had this devotion, or that this zeal were guided by a true light of the gospel."

There are not unfrequent references in the Scriptures to the use of ashes for the purpose of disfiguring the face, and to cast upon the head in token of mourning. When the prophet waited on the road to reprove Ahab for allowing Ben-hadad, king of Syria, to depart in safety, it is said that he "disguised himself with ashes upon his face" (1 Kings xx. 38). As soon as Mordecai the Jew learned that King Ahasuerus had granted a decree to Haman for the destruction of the Jews, and that the same had been sent off into every province, he "rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes" (Esther iv. 1). Our Lord told his disciples when they fasted that they were not, as the hypocrites, to be of a sad countenance; "for," says he, "they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast" (Matt. vi. 16).

The religious ascetics of India almost invariably disfigure their faces with ashes, or cow-dung, or chalk, to make manifest their character and pretensions. Dubois mentions it as one of the regular rules to be observed by Sanyasis, that every morning after bathing they must rub their whole body with ashes. As might be expected, all kinds of Hindu devotees abound in the sacred city of Benares; and Bishop Heber mentions, that there "fakirs' houses, as they are called, occur at every turn, adorned with idols, and sending out an unceasing tinkling and strumming of vinas, biyals, and other discordant instruments, while religious mendicants of every Hindu sect, offering every conceivable deformity which chalk, cow-

dung, disease, matted locks, distorted limbs, and disgusting and hideous attitudes of penance can show, literally line the principal streets on both sides."

It is the usual, if not the universal, practice of these Hindu ascetics to profess mendicancy, and to subsist only on the alms they receive; but they are wont to look upon these alms, not in the light of charitable donations, but as what they may claim as a right, and what, indeed, they are at liberty to demand,—and frequently do demand, associated in such numbers, and equipped after such a fashion, that they present rather the appearance of a band of marauders levying black-mail on foreign foemen, than religious mendicants soliciting charity from peaceful villagers.

Of all the different classes of Hindu ascetics, the Aghoris are perhaps the most disgusting. "The regular worship of this sect has long since been suppressed, and the only traces of it now left are presented by a few disgusting wretches who, whilst they profess to have adopted its tenets, make them a mere plea for extorting alms. In proof of their indifference to worldly objects, they eat and drink whatever is given to them, even ordure and carrion. They smear their bodies also with excrement, and carry it about with them in a wooden cup or skull, either to swallow it, if by so doing they can get a few pice, or to throw it upon the persons or into the houses of those who refuse to comply with their demands. They also, for the same purpose, inflict gashes on their limbs, that the crime of blood may rest upon

the head of the recusant; and they have a variety of similar disgusting devices to extort money from the timid and credulous Hindu. They are, fortunately, not numerous, and are universally detested and feared." *

"The genuine jogi," says Colonel Tod, in his "Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan," "is he who, as the term imports, mortifies the flesh till the wants of humanity are restricted merely to what suffices to unite matter to spirit. We have seen one of these objects self-condemned never to lie down during forty years; and there remained but three to complete the term. He had travelled much, was intelligent and learned, but far from having contracted the moroseness of the recluse, there was a benignity of mien, and a suavity and simplicity of manner in him quite enchanting. He talked of his penance with no vainglory, and of its approaching term without any sensation. The resting position of this Druid was by means of a rope suspended from the bough of a tree in the manner of a swing, having a cross-bar on which he reclined. The first years of this penance, he says, were dreadfully painful; swollen limbs affected him to that degree that he expected death, but this impression had long since worn off. 'Even in this there is much vanity;' and it would be a nice point to determine whether the homage of man, or the approbation of the divinity, most sustains the energies under such appalling discipline."

An old writer, referring to such Hindu ascetics, says :

"Some of them make a vow to rowl themselves for a certain number of leagues over everything that comes in their way, whether it be stones or thorns, whereby they tear all their body in pieces. The Indians," he adds, "have also another sort of fakirs, who are less austere, and assemble in troops. They are great rogues, and 'tis dangerous to meet them in a solitary place, unless you be well provided to defend yourself; yet they are held in great veneration among the Pagans, and also among the Moors (Mohammedans), who have some of that sort among themselves; and it would be a capital crime to beat any one of them." A penance undertaken by some of these devotees, similar to that in which, as mentioned above, they are said to "rowl themselves," is the practice of measuring the distance which lies between two holy places, often hundreds of miles apart, with their own bodies.

It will be evident, from the facts narrated, that whilst some of these Hindu ascetics are sincere, though superstitious and deluded men, that the great majority of them resemble the ancient false prophets and religious impostors amongst the Jews. This they do not only by seeking, like them, to deceive the people and to secure their good opinion that they may make gain thereby, but, as we have seen, even in their garb and outward appearance.

There is a Hindu proverb, quoted in the "Wanderings of a Pilgrim," which says, "At Benares you should be upon your guard against the women, the sacred bulls,

the stairs, and," it is added, "the devotees;" and yet the ignorant and superstitious Hindus still encourage such pretenders and fanatics by their reverence and bounty. When shall the light of divine truth, and the power of the Holy Spirit, deliver the nations from all such pernicious impostors?





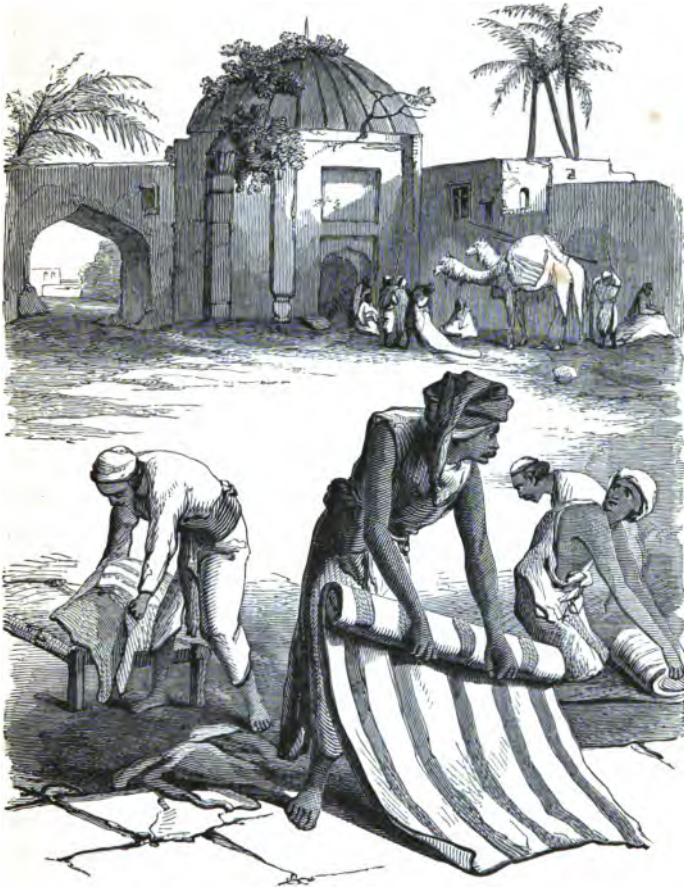
XXVI.

“Take up thy Bed, and Walk.”



BED in England and a bed in India are two very different things. Some of the fine old four-post beds—or rather bedsteads—perhaps, with their bedding and bed-clothes, may be very comfortable to the English mind to contemplate, but give no just conception of what a bed in India is. Even an Englishman in that country would not think of adhering to a bed after the home type; and much less do natives of India make use of anything of the kind.

The commonest form of bed in India is what would most strictly be termed a bedstead, consisting of a light bamboo frame, covered with cane-work of split bamboo, and raised about two feet from the ground on legs, also of bamboo. These *charpoyes*, as they are called, are so light that they can easily be placed on the head and borne away. The Hindu camp-followers, who accompany a marching regiment in India, may frequently be seen, when they get up in the morning, putting their



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bed upon their head and trudging along with it in the rear of the line of march.

It frequently happens, however, that poor Hindus

cannot afford even such a bed as that just described, trifling as is its cost, but content themselves with a blanket or quilt to repose on by night. Where charpoys are made use of, it is customary to have a quilt, or some kind of wrapper, in addition; but very many Hindus have nothing else but such a quilt or wrapper, which they roll up in the morning, and very easily carry away.

Now, in the cases mentioned by the evangelists, in which our Lord commanded those whom he cured to rise and take up their bed, there can be little doubt that the bed was of one or other of the forms just described, and in either case it could be very easily taken up and removed at our Lord's bidding (Matt. ix. 6; Mark ii. 11; John v. 11). Three different words are employed in the passages referred to, and neither of them is the ordinary Greek word for bed; but the one most frequently used of the three strictly means bedstead, rather than bed, which would so far accord with the remarks just made above.

Owing to the warmth of the climate in India and Palestine, accommodation for the night is more simple and more easily obtained than it is in England. There are many Hindus that make use of nothing to rest in by night but their "cummerbund," which is a plain piece of cloth employed to wrap round their head or waist by day. The natives of India do not change their dress by night, as we are accustomed to do, but use continuously the same clothing night and day; and the Scriptures

show us that a similar custom prevailed in Palestine. Thus it is enjoined in the law of Moses that a garment given in pledge should not be retained overnight, but was to be returned by the time that the sun went down ; for, it is added, it " is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin : wherein shall he sleep ? " (Exod. xxii. 27).

Another point in the same connection, in which the practice of Palestine and India agreed, was in servants sleeping at the door of their master's room. In India it is the custom for certain of the servants to sleep on a mat stretched across the threshold of the door of their master's room ; and they have nothing to cover themselves with but their " cummerbund," in which they wrap themselves up in such a manner that a stranger would readily enough mistake them for a roll or bundle lying at the door.

In a similar manner Uriah and the servants of David are represented as sleeping " at the door of the king's house " (2 Sam. xi. 9).





XXVII.

Feet-washing, and Other Ablutions.

THERE is a close connection between cleanliness and godliness ; and it is rare, in any country, to find one indifferent to the former that pays much regard to the latter. In the East, especially, the two are associated in a very intimate manner. Almost all the religions of the East enjoin frequent ablutions on their votaries as a religious observance. The Brahmans, and a great part of the other castes of Hindus, are accustomed to bathe every morning ; and if at any time they contract a ceremonial pollution, an ablution of the whole body is required.

According to the law of Moses, we find that at the consecration of the high priest the ceremony of ablution was specially enjoined to be performed. "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water" (Exod. xxix. 4). Not only was this the case, but further, the priests were required to bathe in the

laver of brass every time they entered the tabernacle or approached the altar to offer sacrifice, under pain of death for neglect of the ceremony. After giving instructions respecting the laver, it is said: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord: so they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Exod. xxx. 19-21). It is very noticeable, further, how frequently the Israelites generally were required to bathe both themselves and their garments when they contracted any ceremonial defilement.

The same thing may be remarked respecting the Brahmans and those of the higher castes in India. If, for instance, a Pariah should allow his shadow to fall on the food which a Brahman was preparing, not only would the Brahman throw the food away, but he would also go and bathe himself and his garments in water to wash off the pollution which had been contracted.

In Eastern countries safety as well as comfort dictates the habit of cleanliness, for where it is disregarded there is great danger of contracting the frightful disease of leprosy. One form of ablution particularly necessary in the East, and more especially in the case of travellers, is the bathing of the feet. Frequent reference is made to

this custom throughout the whole course of Bible history. As Abraham was sitting in his tent door "in the heat of the day"—whilst everything around was motionless, not a breath of air stirring, and the plain glowing with an intense and almost insupportable heat—he suddenly saw three men standing by him. At once he hastens up to them, and presses them to accept his hospitality, saying, first of all, "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree" (Gen. xviii. 4). Further, when two of these same travellers go on to visit Lot at Sodom, the first thing he invites them to do, after urging them to "tarry all night," is, "and wash your feet" (Gen. xix. 2). When Abraham's servant appeared at the house of Laban the Syrian, on his master's errand, Laban said to him, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord," and forthwith gave him "water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him" (Gen. xxiv. 31, 32). So, too, we find that Joseph's steward, when he brought Joseph's brethren into his master's house, gave them water to wash their feet.

In later times, and amongst the wealthier classes, attendants were provided to perform the office; which, being a very humble one, was generally discharged by the lowest class of servants. When David's messengers, by their master's order, proposed to Abigail that she should become their master's wife, Abigail's humble reply was: "Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord" (1 Sam. xxv.

41). To have the feet bathed in cold water is one of the most grateful attentions an Eastern traveller can receive, after having journeyed on foot under a scorching sun and upon a hard-baked and dusty road. Keeping in view the pleasure associated with bathing the feet, we have a key to the Psalmist's meaning in the passage: "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked" (Ps. lviii. 10).

The life of our Lord furnishes two important and touching references to the prevalence and obligation of this custom amongst the later Jews. Our Lord had been invited by one of the Pharisees to dine with him. He accepted the invitation, but was not very courteously received. Although he had probably been moving about in the hot and dusty crowd, his entertainer had not the courtesy to offer him, on his arrival, water to wash his feet. This lack of service, however, a woman supplied in an unusual and touching manner. In the rebuke which our Lord administered to Simon for his neglect, reference is made both to the fact of the omission and also to the way in which it had been so touchingly supplied. "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head" (Luke vii. 44). In regard to the conduct of the woman on this occasion, it may be remarked that not only did she, in her intense gratitude

and devotedness, undertake to perform a very lowly office for our Lord, but the manner in which she performed it is also remarkable. By Eastern women the hair is very highly esteemed; but this woman uses even her hair for the meanest purpose, thinking nothing too costly to be used as a means of expressing her gratitude and love.

The second reference to the custom, in the life of our Lord, is that in which he washes his disciples' feet; thereby teaching them, in a very impressive way, a lesson of humility and of mutual service. It is worthy of notice, further, in connection with this custom, how the apostle, in his First Epistle to Timothy, describes "a widow indeed." Along with other qualifications necessary to attest her to be such, there is enumerated this one: "If she have washed the saints' feet" (1 Tim. v. 10); thereby showing us emphatically that the custom was not one of mere courtesy, but that it derived its obligation from its comfort and utility.

The custom is as prevalent in India as it was in Palestine. When the traveller in India halts for the night, if the master or mistress of the house where he applies for shelter is inclined to receive him, the first thing that is offered is water to wash his feet. In addition to the necessity occasioned by the heat of the climate, the habits of the people render the practice still more necessary; for the Hindus make use of no protection for the feet but a shoe or a sandal—unless, indeed, we except a few Baboos in Calcutta, who, in imitation of the Euro-



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pean practice, may be seen in white silk stockings; an addition to their ordinary costume which makes them look odd enough.

An Englishman in India, whilst travelling by dâk along the Grand Trunk Road, passes thousands of native pedestrians pacing on in the heat and dust; and now and then he may observe them stopping to shake out the dust which has accumulated in their shoes. How great a comfort to such travellers must it be to find in the evening clean cool water to wash their feet!





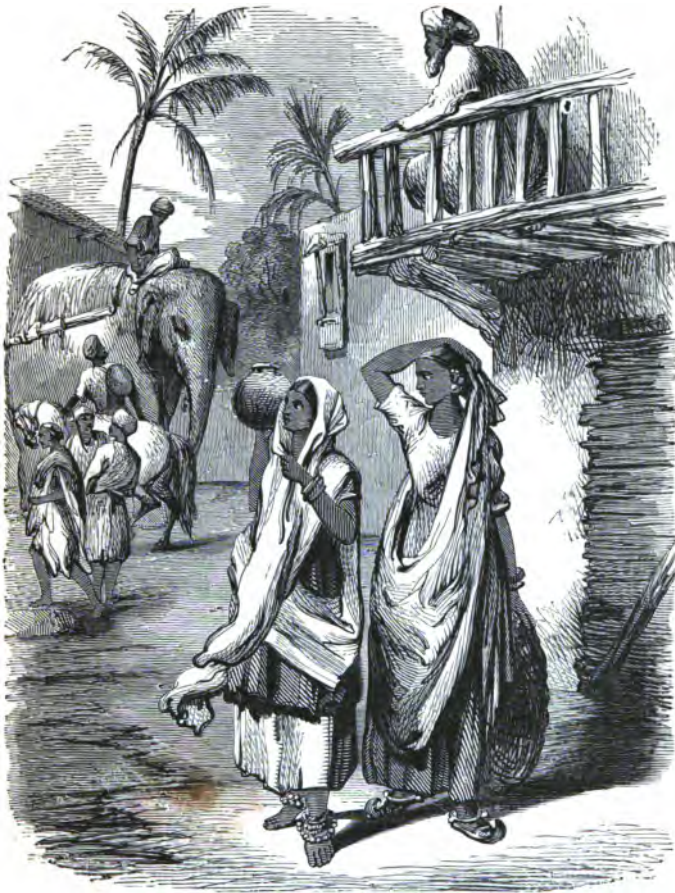
XXVIII.

"A Tinkling with the Feet," and Women's Ornaments.

HINDU women are surprised that English ladies in India wear so few jewels. They themselves are decorated with them in profusion, —even the women of the very poorest class, and beggars not excepted. And not only, indeed, are the women thus bedecked, but the men likewise. When Mr. W. H. Russell was met and entertained by the Rajah of Puttiala, he mentions seeing in the procession "braceleted, ear-ringed, necklaced courtiers on prancing chargers." In regard to the rajah himself, he says: "On the right arm was a famous bracelet, or armlet, of large emeralds, pearls, and diamonds, said to be worth three lacs of rupees (£30,000). But this was mere theatrical tinsel in comparison with the ornaments round his neck and on his breast, which consisted of emeralds as large as pigeon's eggs, and brilliants of immense size. On his fingers were enormous silver rings, set with brilliants,

rubies, and emeralds ;" further, he adds that "rings of precious metal were set round his highness's most favoured pedal digits ;" whilst his dress was so resplendent with jewels, that in the sunlight one could scarce look upon it. It is all but the universal custom in India for men to wear ear-rings ; even the ascetics wear them of brass, if of nothing more costly. Children, too, come in for their share of these decorations, which their parents take a pride in lavishing upon them. This display of ornaments on their children, however, often costs them dear, for it is a matter of almost daily occurrence for children to be carried off and murdered for the sake of their jewels. The Marquis of Hastings records in his private journal, whilst Governor-General of India, an instance that was detailed to him, "where a woman cut the throat of her own nephew, a fine boy between five and six years old, in order to appropriate to herself his bangles, the value of which she must have accurately known. They were worth, in English money, one shilling and tenpence halfpenny."

It is with the ornaments of the women, however, that we have here specially to do. The prophet Isaiah mentions a variety of ornaments made use of by the Jewish women, such as chains, bracelets, ornaments for the legs, ear-rings, rings, nose-jewels (Isa. iii. 20, 21)—a list which seems sufficiently copious ; but the Hindu women use all these ornaments, and others besides. It is a common sight to see a Hindu woman with rings above the elbow, as well as rings on the wrist ; and sometimes



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a series of rings extends the whole way from the wrist to the elbow. Dr. F. Buchanan, in alluding to some of the glass manufactories of Mysore, mentions the making

of glass rings, and says: "These rings are universally worn by the women of the Deccan, as an ornament on the wrists; and their applying closely to the arm is considered a mark of delicacy and beauty; for they must, of course, be passed over the hand. In doing this, a girl seldom escapes without drawing blood, and rubbing part of the skin from off her hand; and as every well-dressed girl has a number of rings on each arm, and as these are frequently breaking, the poor creatures suffer much for their love of admiration. Then the Hindu women, besides, have frequently rings of silver on two or more of their toes, in addition to all the ornaments before mentioned; so that a Hindu lady, when in full dress, with all these ornaments about her, has no inconsiderable weight of jewellery.

In the same chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, already referred to, the Lord speaks thus to his servant regarding the "daughters of Zion:" "Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet" (Isa. iii. 16). Now, the latter part of this verse describes exactly what may often be seen enacted by women in India, who walk "mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet." This they do to attract towards themselves the attention of passers-by; and the tinkling is produced by their anklets, and the rings upon their toes; and in some cases also by bells upon the anklets. The mincing in their walk is thought

to indicate delicacy; and Jahn mentions, in his "Biblical Antiquities," that, in the case of the Jewish women, the anklets were sometimes connected by means of a chain.

Besides other ornaments for the neck, the married Hindu women wear an ornament called a *tahli*. This consists either of a band of gold richly chased, or of a silk network entwined with silver cord; it is put on at the marriage ceremony, and is constantly worn until she becomes a widow, when it is cut off, and all her other ornaments are also laid aside.

In the Song of Solomon the king is represented as saying to his beloved: "Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels" (Song of Sol. i. 10); and the reference doubtless is to the nose-jewel, which is equally worn in India as in Palestine, and consists of a ring, and sometimes of precious stones, suspended through a hole in the right nostril. This ornament reaches down to the lower lip, and occasionally to the chin.

The Hindu women are remarkably fond of a profusion of ornaments, and of fine clothing; and whilst they submit to what European women would consider intolerable seclusion and restraint, they would never consent to go without their jewels: it is not thought right, however, for unmarried women to wear a great part of the ornaments before enumerated. That a similar eagerness for jewellery was manifested by the Jewish women, seems evident from the words of the prophet Jeremiah, speaking in the name of Jehovah: "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?" (Jer. ii. 32).

If we keep in view this fondness of the Jewish women for ornaments, it enhances our estimate of the sacrifice made by the people in offering their jewels for the service of Jehovah. We are told : "They came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought bracelets and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold : and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the Lord" (Exod. xxxv. 22). But, on the other hand, they seemed to show an almost equal readiness to part with their ear-rings to make the golden calf, when Aaron requested these of them. "And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden ear-rings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden ear-rings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron" (Exod. xxxii. 2, 3).

There has been incidental allusion already made to the fact of men among the Jews wearing similar ornaments to the men amongst the Hindus ; and in connection with this point we may just allude to the special reference made to the bracelet worn by Saul, which the Amalekite brought to David along with the crown from Mount Gilboa.





XXIX.

“The Washing of Pots and Cups.”

THE Hindus are very particular in regard to the vessels they use in cooking, as any pollution occasioning defilement to them would contaminate the food, and render those that partook of it unclean. Hence it is considered not so much a question of cleanliness as a religious duty to keep their cooking utensils scrupulously clean. These are made of metal—generally brass—or of earthenware; and after every meal it is customary for them to break the vessel used in cooking, if it be earthenware, and thoroughly to wash and scour it, if of metal. For a Brahman to cook in a vessel used by one of another caste, or even in one touched by such a person, without its being purified, would occasion a horrible defilement, subjecting him to the loss of caste, than which nothing can be more dreadful to the mind of a Hindu. In every bazaar, therefore, where rice and other necessaries are sold, new earthenware vessels are also to be had; and they are so inex-

pensive that several of them may be obtained for the value of one English halfpenny.

It would appear that in our Lord's day a custom similar in some respects prevailed amongst the Pharisees; not as enjoined by the Mosaic ritual, but by the traditions of the elders. The Pharisees had asked our Lord why his disciples did not wash their hands before eating bread, according to the tradition of the elders. In his reply he upbraids them for their impiety and hypocrisy, saying: "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do" (Mark vii. 6-8).

In regard to the custom of washing the hands before meals, to which the Pharisees referred in their question to our Lord, the usage of the East makes such a practice specially necessary. For, as is well known, knives, and forks, and spoons are not used by Orientals when they eat, but the food is conveyed from the dish with the fingers. The Hindus eat with their fingers, and are wont, if possible, not only to wash the hands before meals, but also the whole body. "I was much amused," says the author of "Delhi," "by seeing the boatmen (on the Hooghly) eat. They wash their heads, their teeth, their bodies, their arms and legs, most diligently ;



WASHING POTS AND CUPS.

then each man sits down to a huge metal dish of coarse rice ; then they washed, washed, washed again ; then some of them ate more rice, and then began again to wash."

The following incident will illustrate the strictness with which the rules in regard to the use of "cups and pots" are maintained amongst the Brahmans of India; and it will be seen that the stringency of their rules at least equals anything prescribed by the scribes and Pharisees:—"Eleven Brahmans, in travelling, having passed through a country desolated by war, arrived at length, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, at a village, which, contrary to their expectations, they found deserted. They had brought with them a small portion of rice, but they could find nothing to boil it in but the vessels that were in the house of the washerman of the village. To Brahmans, even to touch them would have been a defilement almost impossible to efface. But being pressed with hunger, they bound one another to secrecy by an oath, and then boiled their rice in one of the pots, which they had previously washed a hundred times. One of them alone abstained from the repast, and as soon as they reached their home he accused the other ten before the chief Brahmans of the town. The rumour quickly spread. An assembly is held. The delinquents are summoned, and compelled to appear. They had been already apprised of the difficulty in which they were likely to be involved; and when called upon to answer the charge, they unanimously protested, as they had previously concerted, that it was the accuser only that was guilty of the fault which he had laid to their charge. Which side was to be believed? Was the testimony of one man to be taken against that of ten?

The result was that the ten Brahmans were declared innocent ; and the accuser, being found guilty, was expelled with ignominy from the tribe by the chiefs, who, though they could scarcely doubt of his innocence, yet could not help being offended with the disclosure he made.” *

* Dubois.





XXX.

Hiring Labourers into the Vineyard.

THE parables of our Lord are almost, if not quite, without exception "founded on fact." His teachings are rarely, if ever, associated with scenes or customs purely imaginary. The circumstances referred to may be totally unlike anything that accords with our experience in this country, but they generally are based upon some object, or custom, or state of things, familiar enough in the East.

This remark applies to the similitude used by our Lord of the householder who hired labourers for his vineyard. Our Lord's parable runs thus:—"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and

whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen" (Matt. xx. 1-16).

Now there are several points in this parable which may receive some illustration from the customs and circumstances of Indian life. It is a sight which one

regularly sees in the towns of India, that of a collection of coolies waiting, like the labourers, to be hired, either on the steps of a mosque, or in the bazaar or market-place of the town. There is at Calcutta a market-place specially set apart as the resort of such labourers waiting for employment, called the "Coolie Bazaar;" and whenever any occasion arises calling for the assistance of a number of labourers, the person requiring them, whether European or native, either goes or sends to the "Coolie Bazaar" for the number he requires.

"On descending the steps of the Jamma Masjid (at Delhi)," says a lady in her journal, "we found a group of Afghans, who, as usual, gazed at us with much curiosity. In the afternoon these steps are the resort of merchants and sellers of every kind; now, early in the morning, they were occupied by men waiting to be hired, as in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard."

It will be observed that the householder went out early in the morning to hire the labourers he required; and in India it is the custom to rise very early, both for the sake of using the earliest light, and also to take advantage of the coolness of the morning hours before the sun reaches his noonday height. Europeans in India, as well as the natives, are early risers, for the sake of fulfilling as much as they can of their daily engagements, or taking the exercise they require for preserving their health, during the cooler hours of the morning, since Europeans cannot expose themselves to the heat of the mid-day sun without the greatest danger.



LABOURERS IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

The householder in the parable is said to have agreed with his labourers at "a penny a day." This, as is well known, does not mean an English penny, but a denarius,

a Roman coin current in Judea, and of the value of about sevenpence halfpenny of our money—but which, regarded as a whole day's wages, may strike us as but poor pay. The pay received by Indian labourers of the class corresponding to that mentioned in the parable would not be nearly so much, however, as the aforementioned sum. Able-bodied coolies generally obtain about eight or ten pice a day; and eight pice are equal to threepence of our money; so that, as a rule, the Indian labourers would receive rather less than half that of the Jewish labourers in the time of our Lord. The law of Moses specially provided for the punctual daily payment of such labourers: "The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning" (Lev. xix. 13). "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it;...lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee" (Deut. xxiv. 14, 15). In India coolies are not invariably paid by the day, sometimes it is by the month, and the time of payment depends partly on the nature of the work on which they are employed; but, as a general rule, that class of labourers receive their pay daily.

There is another point in the parable which receives some illustration from the Indian parallel to it. In the complaint which the labourers make to "the goodman of the house," they specially allude to their having borne

“the burden and heat of the day,” implying that “the heat of the day” was the most exhausting part of their labour. Any one who has been in India will feel at once the force of this reference. So intense in India is the heat in the middle of the day, that not only durst no European venture to work out of doors at that time, but if he exposes himself in any way to the direct rays of the sun, he does so at the imminent risk of his life. Many Europeans have met with their death through venturing to travel during the hot season in the heat of the day, although they were at the same time under the shade of their *palkis*, and had only to lie still in them whilst their bearers carried them along. The natives, however, continue their work during the heat of the day, although the heat at that time is trying even to them; and it is quite a common sight to see them carrying a little straw umbrella, or the leaf or branch of a tree, over their heads, to shelter themselves from the intensity of the sun’s rays.

Such Hindu labourers as those we have been referring to belong to the Sudra caste, the lowest of the four grand divisions into which the Hindus are distributed, and of which the Brahmans form the highest caste. The sacred books of the Hindus place the Sudra caste in a very degraded position, and persons of that caste are often treated by Brahmans with the greatest contempt. In the south of India a Sudra would not be permitted to live even in the same street with a Brahman. The laws of Menu forbid Sudras “to accu-

mulate superfluous wealth ;” and a Brahman is not allowed to give him “ spiritual counsel, or to inform him of the legal expiation for his sins.”

“ The Shoodru,” says Ward, “ cannot perform one religious ceremony in which there are either offerings, prayers, sacrifices, or burnt-offerings, except through the Brahmans ; and the only way in which he can obtain any hope of a better birth is by becoming the constant slave of Brahmans. In the morning, after cleaning the house of the Brahman, he must fetch him water, flowers, clay, and wood for worship ; he must next wash his feet and clothes, anoint his body with oil, wait upon him while he worships ; collect all the materials for his dinner ; after dinner present to him water to wash his mouth ; after which, from the same dish, he is permitted to eat what the Brahman leaves. He must cleanse the ground where the Brahman has eaten, as well as the dishes used at dinner ; must wait on him with betel, tobacco, &c. ; and in the evening supply him with water, light his lamp, and prepare his bed. After lying down he must rub his legs with oil, and when the Brahman has fallen asleep he may take repose. He who in this manner serves Brahmans is declared by the Shastres to act meritoriously.

“ On the contrary, the Shoodru who envies and injures Brahmans will sink into the world of torment. At present, however, no Shoodru will serve a Brahman without wages ; and in some cases, as if his wages are withheld, the Shoodru will contend warmly with his

master. He will offer to the Brahman things which cost him nothing, such as prostrations, bows, flattery, &c., and if he may be repaid in the next world, he will present him with something rather more solid. Some Shoodrus, however, reverence Brahmans as gods, and the whole of the 'swinish multitude' pay them exterior honours. In bowing to a Brahman, the Shoodru raises his joined hands to his forehead, and gently bows the head; the Brahman never returns the compliment, but gives the Shoodru a blessing, extending the right hand a little, as a person would do when carrying water in it. In bowing to a Brahman, the sins of the Shoodru enter the fire—which, by an Eastern figure, is said to lodge in the Brahman's hand—and are consumed. If a Brahman stretch out his hand before a Shoodru has bowed to him, he will sink into a state of misery; and if a Shoodru meet a Brahman and bow not to him, he will meet with the same fate."





XXXI.

“A Cup of Cold Water.”

IN India, the rich do not display their charity in building and maintaining hospitals, as is the custom in this country, but in erecting “serais” and “choultries” to afford shelter to travellers on their journey ; by planting trees along the roads to furnish fruit and shade ; and, above all, by constructing tanks and digging wells to refresh the thirsty traveller, and the pilgrims on their way to the holy places. Of the value of these latter kinds of works we have but a faint idea in this country. We sometimes make use of the expression, “a well of life,” but the phrase has ten-fold significance to a native of the East. In India the opening of a well is the unstopping of a new fountain of life ; whilst its failure or destruction spreads around sterility and death. When a rich man, therefore, wishes to bestow on the inhabitants of a town or village one of the greatest services he can render, he digs them a tank. The cost of such a work, with a flight of steps leading

down to the water, and all the attendant expenses, will often amount to between 4000 and 5000 rupees, or between £400 and £500. Mr. Ward mentions that a wealthy Hindu resident at Burdwan prepared no less than one hundred tanks in different places, and devoted them to the public use. These pools, which are sometimes of immense size, are formally inaugurated and consecrated by a Brahman, who reads on the occasion portions from the Shasters, and then announces, in the name of the donor, "I offer this pond of water to quench the thirst of mankind;" after which ceremony it is no longer lawful to reserve it for private use.

The principal zemindar, or landholder, of Baroche, during the time of Mr. Forbes's residence there, constructed, as an act of public charity, a large well in the suburbs of the town. It was elegantly built of hewn stone, with steps leading down to the water; and over the fountain was placed a tablet, with a Persian inscription recording the beneficence of the giver of the well.

To travellers in Eastern countries water is a necessary that takes the precedence even of food; and among the first acts of hospitality with which travellers are greeted in the East is "a cup of cold water." When persons meet one another on the road, in India, almost the first inquiry made on such occasions is, "What kind of water is there at the next station?" and that before any question is put respecting the place or people. During the hottest months of the year, when pools dry up, and there is great general scarcity of water, rich Hindus build huts

by the roadside, and station persons in them to supply travellers with water gratuitously, which is regarded as an act of merit; and sometimes the inhabitants of a district combine to afford the same accommodation.

As evidence to the existence of a similar custom, we find it recorded in the prophecy of Isaiah: "The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty" (Isa. xxi. 14); whilst Eliphaz, in the list of charges which he advances against Job, says: "Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink" (Job xxii. 7).

There are many instances presented to us in the Scriptures of the terrible privations endured in consequence of a scarcity of water; whilst, on the other hand, the immense blessing of a seasonable supply is impressively taught. Thus we read of Hagar in despair casting her child on the ground to die, as soon as the water was spent in her bottle (Gen. xxi. 15). The first thing that the children of Israel began to murmur for after leaving Egypt was a supply of water (Exod. xv. 22). After Samson had slain a thousand of the Philistines with the "jaw-bone of an ass" (Judges xv. 15), he was like to have fallen into his enemies' hands for want of "a cup of cold water" (Judges xv. 18). Before asking of the widow of Zarephath "a morsel of bread" (1 Kings xvii. 11), the prophet Elijah first begs of her "a little water in a vessel," to drink (1 Kings xvii. 10); and our Lord, who said to his disciples, "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name,...shall not

lose his reward" (Mark ix. 41), himself asked this very service of the "woman of Samaria" (John iv. 7).

Mr. Forbes mentions his having on one occasion, whilst travelling in India, had personal experience of the severe straits to which travellers are often driven in warm countries for want of "a cup of cold water." He speaks of his almost dying of thirst on one occasion, when, having emptied his own canteen for some wounded soldiers, he afterwards asked for a few drops from a friend, without success. Often during a short slumber in his palanquin, he says, he has realized the affecting description of the thirsty man who "dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite" (Isa. xxix. 8).

In view of these facts, what a forcible but mournful description is given of man's fondness for sin, when he is said to drink in iniquity like water (Job xv. 16)—that is, with greedy and impatient haste. On the other hand, what intense longing for God's presence does David express in the words of the psalm: "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is" (Ps. lxiii. 1).

Some of the largest tanks and reservoirs in India are the work of its sovereign princes, who sought by constructing colossal works of that description to display their munificence, and to secure the grateful attachment of their subjects. And is the "glorious Lord" less mindful of his people, or less bountiful towards them than the princes of the earth? "When the poor and needy seek

water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water" (Isa. xli. 17, 18).

Amongst the grievances which the prophet Jeremiah represents Zion as preferring before the Lord in her desolate and oppressed condition, is the complaint, "We have drunken our water for money" (Lam. v. 4). In India water is regularly sold by a class of men called *bheesties*, or water-carriers, who supply strangers and travellers in towns with water, as well as the inhabitants of the place. These *bheesties* attend armies also on their march, and their employment in such circumstances is often very laborious and difficult. It is their custom to go on before, so as to have water ready by the time that the army halts: they then charge so much for each cup of water, the price varying according to circumstances; and when the water has been very difficult to procure, the price charged will sometimes amount to more than thirty times its usual rate. Because the Ammonites and Moabites had not met the people of Israel with "bread and water in the way" (Deut. xxiii. 4), the law of Moses enjoined that no individual from amongst those nations, "even to their tenth generation," should "enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever."

Speaking of his true disciples, our Lord says: "Who-soever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a



GIVING WATER TO A TRAVELLER.

cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." In an Eastern country the gift of "a cup of cold water" is

not of such trifling value as it is with us ; for it is often very difficult to procure, and is at the same time so pressingly needed that life or death depends upon its being obtained. To bestow "a cup of cold water," in the East, on a thirsty traveller, is, under any circumstances, a very benevolent act ; but in order to have a Christian value, and to gain the reward which our Lord's words hold out, it must be offered in "the name of a disciple,"—that is, to Christ's people for Christ's sake. At that great and dreadful day "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," when before him "shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left,—then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for...I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ;" whilst he shall say to those on the left, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire : for...I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink....Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me" (Matt. xxv. 31-46).





XXXII.

Women and Tribes.

THERE are few points respecting which the peoples of the East and the West differ more widely in their notions and conduct than in regard to women; and there is nothing, at the same time, which, in our view, so unmistakably evinces the inferiority, not to say barbarism, of Eastern nations, as their treatment of the gentler sex.

Woman in Eastern countries is regarded not merely as the inferior, but as the servant or slave, of man. And it would be incorrect to suppose that, in this case, it is only practice that has become debased, whilst their religious doctrines and moral standards teach juster and more elevated views; for the teaching is on a level with the practice. The Padma Purana, a Hindu sacred book of the highest authority, speaks thus of the duty of a wife towards her husband:—"Her husband may be aged, crooked, infirm, blind, and deaf, or offensive in his manners; suppose him cross-tempered, choleric, dis-

sipated, irregular, a drunkard, a gambler, an incorrigible debauchee—even if he be utterly reckless concerning domestic happiness or the peace of his home—if he be benumbed by indifference, or violent as a demon—if he live in the world without honour, disgraced and contemned,—his many crimes and infirmities will assuredly weigh him down to the earth, but never shall his wife regard him otherwise than as the idol of her heart!” *

It is required of the Hindu wife that she shall serve her husband with all her might, obey him in everything, and see no fault in his character. It is declared, also, that, in every stage of her life, woman has been created to obey. At first, this obedience is due to her father and mother; when married, to her husband and her father-in-law and mother-in-law; and in old age, to her children.

Springing out of the notion of the inferiority of women to men, is the intense desire of Hindu wives for male children; and the Rajpoots were formerly in the habit of destroying many of their female infants. “An intelligent native,” says Mr. F. de Ward, “once called on an English gentleman in Bombay, ‘to condole with him,’ as he himself expressed it, because the little stranger added to the family was a daughter.”

We read of many instances in the Bible of a similar longing on the part of the Hebrew women for sons; such cases are those of Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, and others.

It may have struck us, in reading certain of the

* “Asiatic Tour.”

earlier Bible narratives, that the wives of even wealthy and eminent men are described as performing what we should esteem menial duties. Thus Abraham bade Sarah prepare the cakes wherewith to entertain the three strangers that came to visit him; Abraham's servant, we are told, met Rebekah, the future wife of Isaac, his master's son, at the well, fetching water for the household; the daughters of Laban and Jethro kept their father's flocks; and Job, although a distinguished emir, and the greatest man of all the East, says: "If I have laid wait at my neighbour's door, then let my wife grind unto another" (Job xxxi. 9, 10).

In various rural districts of India, women of high rank may be seen baking and grinding, and also acting the part of Rebekah, by going out to the well for water. It is the usual practice, moreover, in that country, for husbands to look upon their wives as their servants; and where circumstances call for it, they are actually made use of in that capacity.

The following extract will show how the Mahrattas are accustomed to make use of their wives:—"On reaching the encampment for the night, in the course of one of their many expeditions, the fatigued husband lies down on his mat, and the wife commences her duties. She first shampoos her husband, and fans him to sleep; she next shampoos the horse, rubs him down, and gives him provender; she then takes some care of the ox, which has carried their stores, and drives off the poor ass to provide for himself. These matters completed, she next

lights a fire, and dresses rice and curry, or kneads dough for cakes, which are prepared and baked in a simple manner. When the husband awakes, his repast is ready; and having also prepared a meal for the children and herself, the careful matron occupies the mat, and sleeps till daybreak, when all are in motion, and ready for another march."

It is considered enough for a woman in India to be able to bake, grind, and perform the usual simple domestic duties. No further education is imparted to her, nor is it thought to be necessary. The sentiment usually entertained is, that a wife is no fit companion for her husband; and practice tends to make this false notion true in point of fact, since women are denied all accomplishments, and even the simplest elements of a literary education. Thus in India none of the women are taught to read or write, except it be the immodest girls attached to the temples; who alone, also, are taught to sing and dance. The Hindus have a proverb to the effect that "Debt is a man's husband;" meaning, thereby, that a debtor is at the mercy of his creditors, as a wife is conceived to be at that of her husband.

When the wife of a Brahman addresses him, she is accustomed to incline her head and raise her joined hands to her forehead, in token of respect. We find in the Scriptures that the women usually spoke of their husbands by the title of "lord;" and St. Peter refers particularly to the fact of Sarah thus addressing Abraham: "For after this manner in the old time the

holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" (1 Peter iii. 5, 6). The Hindu women speak of their husbands in exactly the same way, alluding to them in conversation as "the master," or "lord;" and in calling them they never make mention of their husband's own name, which would be considered a grievous impropriety, but use "*swamy*," "lord," or else some interjection, such as "O!" or "He!"

Those marks of respect which we think it becoming in men to pay to women, are in India, on the contrary, offered by women to men. One of their sacred books gives the following directions in regard to the behaviour of wives in the presence of their husbands:—"When in the presence of her husband, a woman must not look on one side or the other; she must keep her eyes on her master, to be ready to receive his commands. When he speaks, she must be quiet and listen to nothing besides. When he calls her, she must leave everything else and attend upon him alone." Hindu women are not allowed to sit in the presence of their husbands or near relatives; and it is not considered proper for the wives of the Brahmans to converse with one another, or with any one, in the presence of their husbands, but to direct their whole attention to them. And, strange as the fact must appear to us, Hindu wives not only prefer this grave and deferential intercourse between themselves and their husbands, but would disapprove of any easy

familiarity on their husband's part. The Abbé Dubois states that he has seen a wife in a rage with her husband for conversing with her in an easy strain. "His behaviour covers me with shame," quoth she, "and I dare no longer show my face. Such conduct amongst us was never seen till now. Is he become a Paraquay [a term of reproach for a European]; and does he suppose me to be a woman of that caste?"

In several of the Scripture narratives we find traces of a similar state of manners existing among the Israelites. When Rebekah saw Isaac approaching, in token of respect she "lighted off her camel;" and Rachel apologizes to her father for not rising in his presence, when she wished to conceal the stolen images. Abigail "lighted off her ass" on meeting David, and fell at his feet; as also did the Shunammite, when she went to summon Elisha the prophet upon the death of her son.

There exists in India the singular custom for wives never to take their meals with their husbands, nor even to eat in their presence. It is the duty of the Hindu wife to cook and serve her husband's dinner, to wait upon him during his meal, then to bring him water to wash his mouth and hands, and finally to supply him with his hookah; after which she retires to take with the children what remains after her "lord" has dined. In the case of the wealthy, the women take their meals in their own apartments, and are usually very abstemious; but they occasionally give expensive entertain-



A "WIFE" IN INDIA.

ments to their female friends in their private apartments.

In the Bible we read only once of a woman eating in

company with men, and that is the exceptional case of Ruth, who shared with the reapers of Boaz their harvest-field repast. Whereas, on the other hand, we read of a separate entertainment given to the women by Vashti, the queen, when King Ahasuerus made a feast for his princes. Our Lord was on one occasion entertained at supper, with his disciples, by the family of Bethany ; but yet neither Martha nor Mary seem to have sat at table with our Lord and his disciples and Lazarus, since Martha served, whilst Mary anointed Jesus' feet. And the same custom—of the women and children eating apart from the men—no doubt explains why the evangelist Matthew gives the number of the men apart from the women and children, on the occasion of our Lord's miraculously feeding the five thousand with the loaves and fishes.

It is a well-known fact that women in Eastern countries enjoy much less liberty, and are more secluded, than women in most European countries are ; and this remark applies in its full force to the women of India. There is ample evidence, however, in the more ancient literature of India, to show that the Hindu women, previous to the era of the Mohammedan conquest, enjoyed much more freedom than they now possess. From his Mohammedan conqueror the Hindu has learned jealousy to seclude his wife and female relatives, although in some parts of India—as, for instance, in the territories of the Mahrattas and Rajpoots—the women are permitted greater freedom than elsewhere. But the ma-

jority of Hindu women of the wealthier classes are jealously secluded ; so much so, that many of them "have never enjoyed the sight of an extensive landscape." Many of them have never even seen a garden, or a river, a grove of trees, or an open field. "These flowers are beautiful—very beautiful ; how pretty must not the ground be where they grow in great numbers !" is an exclamation which a European lady heard from them frequently. "They will often ask with wonder," remarks the same lady,—"'How do these things grow ?—How do they look in the ground ?'" And yet so far are the Hindu women from complaining of their confinement, that "a Hindu female is as equally surprised how enjoyment should be found in company, as a European lady can be at the former's bearing patiently the horrors of confinement." As some compensation, perhaps, for her rigid seclusion, a Hindu lady will on no account consent to be without a profusion of jewellery and fine clothing.

The Jewish women, although they possessed far less liberty than European women enjoy, were yet not secluded with the same strictness as the women of India. In the Temple at Jerusalem there was a separate court for the women ; and at the celebration of feasts and festivals in India, the women are secluded from the male guests, but are allowed to be present, separated by a latticed screen, which permits them to see all that passes without themselves being seen.

Not only are the Hindu women secluded from the

public gaze, but even in their own houses they are not admitted by their husbands to freedom and familiarity of intercourse. A wife "never mixes in company even at her own house, but remains in a separate room, while her husband sits smoking and talking with the guests. A man, except he be of low caste, never enters into conversation with his wife during the day ; and she is not permitted to sit in the company of even near friends."

Among the lower castes and poorer classes, however, there is not found the same rigid seclusion of females ; but this is owing to the narrowness of their accommodation, which renders the same amount of seclusion impossible. But in proportion to the respectability of the family, the more rigidly are the women secluded from the public eye.





XXXIII.

Dancing as a Religious Observance, &c.

DANCING was regarded in the early ages of the world as a sacred exercise. It was principally used for sacred purposes; and amongst certain peoples—such as, for example, the Hindus—it still forms one of the services of religion. The first direct reference made in the Bible to dancing is on the occasion of a religious rejoicing, when Miriam took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances, to praise the Lord for their deliverance from the Egyptians (Exod. xv. 20). As it usually accompanied music, we may without doubt assume a much earlier employment of dancing than on the occasion just mentioned, as even before the Flood we read of the invention of the harp and the organ; but the incident referred to above is the first direct allusion to the practice in the Scriptures. Similar instances of devout thanksgiving and rejoicing to that of Miriam's are to be found in the meeting of Jephthah (Judges xi. 34),

and of Saul and David, by women, with timbrels and dances (1 Sam. xviii. 6).

That dancing was used by the Egyptians in their idolatrous worship, may be gathered from the conduct of the Israelites at Mount Sinai, where Moses, on his descent from communing with Jehovah on the mount, found the people engaged in dancing before the golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 19); therein imitating, doubtless, those idolatrous rites which they had so often witnessed in Egypt.

When the ark was brought, in solemn procession, from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David, King David himself danced before it with all his might (2 Sam. vi. 14); and we learn from the Sixty-eighth Psalm, that bands of maidens, with timbrels and dances, were regularly made use of in the worship of the Tabernacle.

There can be little doubt that dancing also formed a conspicuous element in the celebration of the great Jewish festivals, more especially in that of the Feast of Tabernacles. "Let Israel," says the Psalmist, "rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance... Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord" (Ps. cxlix. 2, 3; cl. 3-6).

The Hindus would not consider any religious celebra-



IDOL PROCESSION.

tion complete without music and dancing. In every idol procession in India men may be seen going before and dancing, as David did before the ark. All the

Hindu temples—at least, all that can afford it—have a band, or bands, of dancing-girls regularly attached to them, who are employed in the usual religious services twice every day; in addition to which, these dancing-girls form part of all public processions on festive occasions. Whilst these Hindu dancing-girls, however, correspond to the damsels referred to in the Scriptures, so far as similarity of duty is concerned, they present a painful contrast to them in another respect; for the Hindu dancing-girls are not only grossly licentious in their habits, but are formally consecrated to a life of licentiousness. Not only are they expected to stimulate and promote this vice as a source of gain to the temple, but it is considered part of their religious duties to do so, and that even during the performance of the services of their so-called religious worship.

The author of the "Oriental Memoirs" gives an account of a celebration, of which dancing formed a part, which he witnessed at Dhuboy. In the instance to which he refers, they were not professional dancing-girls who took part in the festival, but damsels belonging to families resident in the town; and certain of the facts narrated are interesting from the resemblance they have to the conduct of Miriam and the women of Israel on the shore of the Red Sea. Within the walls of the town there is a tank three-quarters of a mile in circumference, lined with hewn stone, and having a flight of steps all round it. It is a magnificent and costly work, constructed at an outlay of nearly £60,000; and during the pre-

valence of drought, it is of the utmost service to the farmers of the district, by affording a supply of water to themselves and their cattle. This reservoir is supplied, not only by the periodical rains, but also from receptacles outside the town walls, with which it is connected by means of a stone aqueduct, which enters the tank from underneath a small temple, by a picturesque cascade, in the hallowed groves of the Brahmans. The opening of this aqueduct at the commencement of the rainy season affords a festival to the inhabitants of several days duration; and, like the Egyptians at the annual rising of the Nile, they make religious processions to the temples, and perform their flowery sacrifices in the surrounding groves. The elders look on with complacency, younger females dance on the banks, while the boys rush into the foaming cataract and swim about the lake. The dances in which the younger women engage on these occasions, are less formal and more active than those usually seen in India, and are unlike those of the regular dancing-girls. They seem to be unstudied; and the songs which accompany them, like the rhapsodies of the Italian improvisatore, or those of their own bhauts and minstrels, are all extemporaneous effusions. During the festive rites, the Brahmans offer sacrifices in the temples and adjoining groves to their different deities.

Although dancing was at first used for religious purposes, it was in after-times employed on joyous occasions which possessed no religious design or significance. Our Lord alludes to the practice in his parable of the Prodi-

gal Son; where the elder son, on his return to the house, heard the sound of music and dancing, with which the returned prodigal was being welcomed home (Luke xv. 25).

The incident in which Herodias is referred to as dancing before Herod and his courtiers, would lead us to believe that a custom prevailed of using hired female dancers for entertainment, similar to the Hindu "nautch-girls;" although, so far as Herodias personally was concerned, the dancing was voluntary (Mark vi. 22). St. Mark, in his narrative of the incident, describes a scene which corresponds very closely, in some particulars, to a "nautch," as it may be witnessed in an Indian prince's or rajah's palace, where the same potent influence of the dancing, and the same reckless prodigality in rewarding the fortunate dancer, may be seen still to have their parallels.

A very interesting incident of the kind is narrated in the "Private Life of an Eastern King," which will serve to illustrate several points in the evangelist's narrative. There was introduced on one occasion, as part of the King of Oude's usual evening entertainment, "a Cashmere singing-girl. She was eminently handsome, with the large, black eyes peculiar to the East, and that perfection of physical form more frequently observed in India than elsewhere, on account of the dress. This Cashmere girl—Nuna, by name—delighted his majesty all the more because the agent who had engaged her in the Punjab had said little about her merits. There was a pathos about her voice in singing—a plaintive pathos, as she

sang of the happy valley where she had been brought up; there was a languor, with a drooping sadness, about the large, black eyes; and an indifference and ease of manner about every movement, all very charming to hear and see. She was introduced only as an ordinary nautch-girl; but fortunately, or unfortunately, for her, the other entertainment of the evening had been an utter failure, and a languid attention was bestowed upon her. The king looked, listened, was pleased, and expressed his pleasure. Nuna's eyes glowed with triumph and exultation as she heard his words. You could see the heaving of her bosom as she tried to compose her agitated thoughts. 'Shavash! shavash!' (bravo! bravo!) shouted the king, and the poor girl's colour came and went with pride and pleasure, as in a hectic fever; and if she was intoxicated with joy, it was a king who was thus applauding,—and two of that king's six wives were of humbler origin than the Cashmere singing-girl. For a little it seemed as if her excitement would overcome her; but she recovered her composure, and danced and sang better than ever. 'You shall have one thousand rupees for this night's singing,' said the king. One thousand rupees!—£100—a fortune to a poor Cashmere girl. When the king was leaving the table for the harem, he would have no support but Nuna's arm.

"The next evening no other nautch-girl but Nuna would be heard. She was richly decorated, jewels glistened on her arms and ankles—the flush of triumph was on her cheek. 'You shall have two thousand

rupees (£200) for this night's singing!' exclaimed the king; and again was he borne off by Nuna from the table. This went on for many evenings. The king's liberality apparently knew no bounds, and the court bowed before Nuna. The king's wives no longer remembered that she was a nautch-girl. The female attendants, who had regarded her the first evening with contempt, were first civil, then respectful, then subservient and fawning. 'I will build you a house of gold, and you shall be my padshah begum (the chief wife, or queen) some day, Nuna!' exclaimed the king, in a drunken fit of enthusiasm one evening. Nuna's favour was at its height.

"For several days nothing was seen of her, as some native holidays interrupted the usual amusements; but at the end of a week Nuna reappeared, looking and singing and dancing as well as ever. 'Boppery bopp!' exclaimed the king, yawning as he gazed on her, 'but she wearies me. Is there no other amusement this evening? Let us have a quail-fight, khan.' The favourite rose to order in the quails. The king looked at Nuna with languid satiety. 'I wonder how she would look in a European dress,' he observed, half to himself, and half to the tutor who sat next to him. No one replied. The favourite reappeared, and the king made the same observation to him. 'Nothing is easier, sire, than to see how she would look,' was his reply. A gown and other articles of European female attire were sent for; and when they were brought, Nuna was told to retire

and put them on. Poor Nuna reappeared in her new costume. A more wretched transformation it is hardly possible to conceive. The clothes hung loosely about her, in an eminently dowdyish way. She felt that she was ridiculous. All grace was gone; all beauty was hidden. It was distressing to see her disheartened look as she took her place again. The king and the favourite laughed heartily at her plight, whilst hot, scalding tears coursed down Nuna's cheeks. The attendant females had no pity for her, and chuckled at her disgrace. For days—nay, for weeks—did poor Nuna so reappear, a laughing-stock. The king would see her in no other dress. Everything she did was displeasing. She asked permission again and again to leave the court and return to Cashmere; but such permission was denied her. The Mohammedan festival of Mohurrim caused an interval of forty days; but nothing more was seen of Nuna. She never after appeared in the palace. What became of her, the writer of the account was never able to discover; and the favourite was as ignorant as himself, or pretended to be so. His conjecture was, that she had been given as a slave to some of the begums in the harem; but one of the eunuchs declared there was no truth in this supposition. Her name was once mentioned in the king's presence in an inquiring sort of way; but the king took no notice of it."

Besides the custom of religious dancing, which the Hindus and Israelites had in common, they seem both to have made use of certain special movements and postures

as expressive of devotion. Thus the Psalmist speaks in one place of compassing God's holy altar (Ps. xxvi. 6); and Hindus may often be seen walking round and round a temple, or image, or other sacred object, in token of reverence. Some religious sects—such as the Jains—make it part of their daily worship to circumambulate a temple; the devout Hindus follow a similar practice at Benares; and they may sometimes even be seen “compassing” a superior as a mark of respect.

When the Israelites were the second time defeated in their contest with the Benjamites, it is said that they went into the house of the Lord, and “*sat there before the Lord*” (Judges xx. 26); and King David is referred to as acting in the same manner. Hindus may frequently be observed seated in silence before an idol.

Zophar, in the course of the reproof which he addressed to Job for justifying himself, says: “If thou prepare thine heart, and *stretch out thine hands toward him*; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles” (Job xi. 13, 14). This practice of “stretching out the hands” towards the object of worship is referred to several times in the Psalms, and seems to have expressed submission coupled with an entreaty for help. “If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart” (Ps. xliv. 20, 21); and, again, speaking of Jehovah's acts of favour to his people, and of the submission to him of “the kingdoms of the earth,”

the Psalmist says: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps. lxxviii. 31). When the Hindus present a petition to their gods, they may be seen "stretching out their hands" joined together, and open, as if they hoped to receive at once the object of their request. In the ceremony of "compassing" a temple, likewise, the worshipper keeps his right hand stretched out towards the temple as he moves round.





XXXIV.

Marks on the Forehead.


IN the visions of judgment which were granted to the prophet Ezekiel, prefiguring the terrible calamities about to descend on the people of Jerusalem for their idolatries, we read: And the Lord "called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary" (Ezek. ix. 3-6).

When the Lord's judgment was to overtake the city, its inhabitants were not to be destroyed promiscuously.





There was a remnant left who were true to the God of Israel, and in the prophet's vision the safety of these was secured by their having a mark set upon their foreheads to show to whom they belonged. In the Book of the Revelation there are frequent allusions to the "servants of God" and the "worshippers of the beast," each being sealed in the forehead with a distinctive mark. "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Rev. vii. 2, 3).

On the other hand, it was required of all the worshippers of the beast, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," that they should "receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Rev. xiii. 16, 17). And in the eternal city, where there shall be no night, neither shall they need the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, it is said of his servants, "And they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev. xxii. 4) ; while of those who receive the "mark of the beast," it is declared, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night" (Rev. xiv. 11).

Amongst the Hindus it is the custom for every one to wear on his forehead the mark of the god to whose wor-

ship he is devoted. Those most frequently used are the marks distinctive of the sects of Vishnu and Siva. The worshippers of Vishnu wear upon their foreheads a mark  somewhat resembling a trident, to which it has been likened; whilst the worshippers of Siva wear a round spot about the size of a shilling upon the middle of their foreheads. Although these may be the marks which are most commonly used, there are amongst the Hindus a great variety of other marks, differing both in form and colour. Some of these are confined to particular districts, others to particular castes and sects. Sometimes a Hindu may be seen wearing a combination of marks, made up of the signs characteristic of the worship of as many different gods; and all who frequent the temples for worship are expected to wear some mark on their forehead.

When a Hindu rises in the morning, he goes to the Ganges, or to some sacred lake or river, to perform his ablutions; after which, should he be a man of devout habits, he proceeds to the performance of the "sundhya," or daily prayers, and whilst thus engaged wears on his forehead the mark of his caste. These marks are thus represented in Belnos's "Sundhya":—

Mark for the Brahmans	
Mark for the Chutriyas	
Mark for the Vaisyas	
Mark for the Sudras	

These marks are put on with the mud of the river or lake, or with a paste made of white sandal-wood; and after the prayers are ended the mark is washed off, to



MARKS ON THE FOREHEAD.

make way for the mark indicative of the deity to whose worship he is devoted that day, and this is placed on his forehead by a Brahman.

Some devotees paint these marks not only on their forehead, but also on their arms and breasts; and Yogis may at times be seen with their whole bodies spotted or barred over with mud, vermilion, or yellow earth.


A variety of substances is made use of to produce these marks. Some of these have already been alluded to, as river mud, coloured earths, vermilion, and sandal-wood ground into a paste; in addition to these, turmeric is sometimes employed, and the ashes of cow-dung, as well as various other substances.


A great part of the Hindus are ignorant of the meaning of the symbols they thus impress upon their bodies. Sometimes they are looked on as mere ornaments, but generally they are dictated by superstition. "But whatever the motive may be," says Dubois, "the custom and fashion require that every man should have his forehead adorned with some one of the marks used in the country. To have it bare is the token of being in mourning; or it signifies that they are yet unbathed and have not broken their fast; and it is as inconsistent with decorum for any one to present himself in that unseemly condition before any company, or any individual of respectability, as it would be in Europe to go into polite society with matted hair or disordered apparel."


The Hindu women are not so particular in the use of these marks as the men, and often wear only a little spot of red, black, or yellow on their forehead, or else a line drawn with a little ashes. Women of fair complexion, however, may be seen with flowers printed on their chin,


cheeks, and arms, which are produced by rubbing the juices of certain plants on the skin, and then slightly puncturing it with needles, thereby imprinting an indelible mark. The Israelites were expressly forbidden by their law to print any marks of that description on their persons.


Although, as has been mentioned, the marks worn by different castes and sects amongst the Hindus are very various, the Brahmans, who officiate as high priests in the temples of Devtas, use only six. These marks, which are used by them in the "poojas" of the particular gods they worship at the time, are thus given in the "Sundhya," to which allusion has already been made.


In the "pooja" or worship of Vishnu, the sign  is put on the forehead with mud of the sacred stream. Many draw it on the breast and arms also; and the worshipper wears likewise a necklace of toolsee seeds.

In the "pooja" of Mahadeo, the sign worn is , drawn with yellow sandal; and the head, neck, and wrist are adorned with strings of the roodrakh,—the dried berries of the eleocarpus.

In the "pooja" of Devee (Shio Shiva), this  is the sign worn, between the two eyebrows, of red sandal: the sputikmala, or string of crystal beads, is worn round the neck.

In the "pooja" to Soorya (sun), the sign worn is ; the lines being drawn with sandal, and the spot in the middle with vermilion: a crystal necklace is also worn in this "pooja."

In the "pooja" of Gunesch the sign worn is  , drawn with vermilion ; and a necklace of the seeds of the lotus is worn round the neck.

In the "pooja" of Hunooman, the sign worn is  , reaching from the eyebrows down the nose—the outside line being white, and the centre one vermilion ; and it is sometimes drawn also on the breast of the worshipper.

These are the six marks used by the Brahmans in their "poojas," in which also they use a great variety of vessels, and go through certain rites and postures, which, however, it would be foreign to the particular subject in hand to enter into a description of here.





XXXV.

“Preparing the Way.”

IN England we have the advantage of so many excellent roads, and enjoy such facilities for travelling, that we are apt to consider the Eastern practice of sending men on before to prepare the way for princes and great men, as merely a piece of empty pomp and state; but in so judging, our own circumstances mislead us. In India it is a plain matter of necessity for all who travel in any kind of vehicle to send harbingers before them to see that the roads are fit for their passage; unless they happen to be travelling on such as the Grand Trunk Road, which is specially maintained by Government. Throughout India, and Eastern countries generally, it is not the custom to keep up roads; and accordingly, when any royal personage or great man enters a district, roads have to be made “for the nonce.” Notwithstanding the constant occasion for travelling which English occupation and residence in India

give rise to, so miserable was the state of the roads near even the city of Madras some years ago, that a drive over a portion of one of the main roads was had recourse to as an ordeal to test the strength and soundness of new gun-carriages !

The want of good roads in India is due not only to the fact of their being but rarely made, but partly also to their being so quickly destroyed even when they have been constructed. The rains and inundations of a single rainy season will so destroy a good road as to render it all but impassable. During the wet months, the road often cannot even be seen for inundations ; and when these have passed away, the track is found so broken up by ravines and chasms at one place, and so obstructed by hills of sand and mud at another, that no kind of vehicle can pass along it. In some districts the hot season also adds to the difficulties of transit on the roads of India, as the intense heat produces cracks and fissures in the soil, which are often several feet wide and many feet in depth.

Lord Valentia, during his travels in India, came upon a road which the Duke of Wellington (then General Wellesley) had, a year before, caused to be carefully constructed ; but he then found it in such a condition that he says he did not know how he should ever have passed it, "had not the Dewan of Mysore sent labourers to repair the worst part of the road." Such being the state of the case, it will be evident that it becomes a simple necessity for all who travel in vehicles of any

kind to send persons on before to have the roads got ready for their passage.

When the halcarra, or messenger, of a prince or great man reaches a village with the news of the great man's approach, the headman of the village issues a proclamation to the villagers to repair the road as far as the next village; when they accordingly hasten to fill up the chasms and ravines, and to level the heaps of mud and sand which the waters have thrown up: and in this way the road is prepared. This service is rendered gratuitously to governors and persons in office.

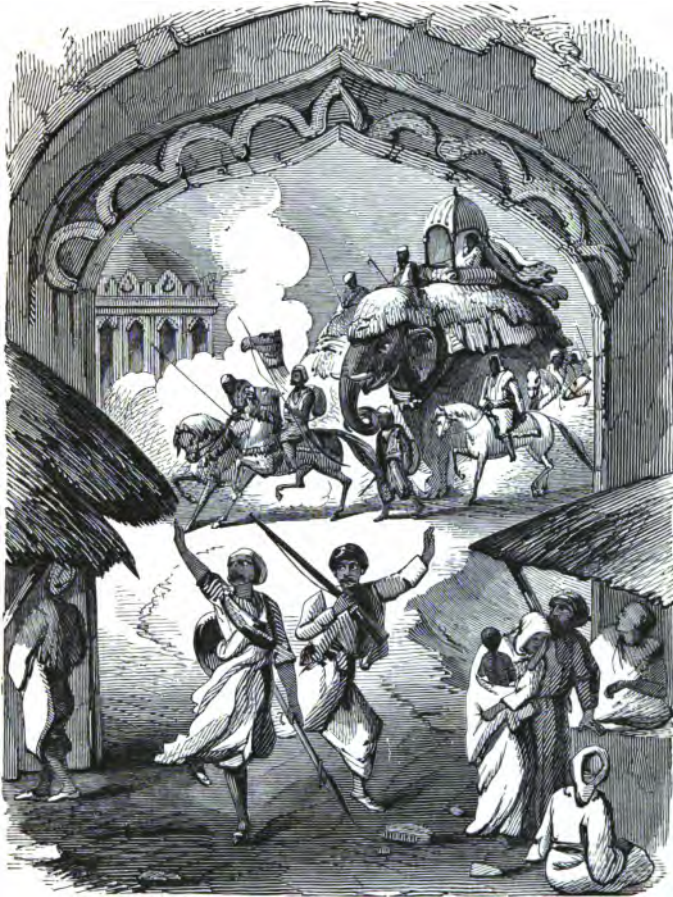
The Old Testament prophets several times allude to this custom, as well as to the harbinger, whose duty it is to go before and see that the road is got ready. Isaiah thus predicts the coming of John the Baptist as the forerunner of Christ: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. xl. 3-5).

How exactly this prediction was fulfilled, is related in the words of the evangelist Luke: "The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the

prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke iii. 2-6). As the forerunner of the Messiah, John came preaching repentance, as the way to prepare for the coming of Christ; for until the heights of pride and self-righteousness are cast down, and the soul is abased in the dust of penitence and self-condemnation for sin, men's minds are not prepared for the advent of God's anointed Saviour.

But we read in the Scriptures of heralds going before great men to prepare the way, not only in the open country, but also in towns and cities, to proclaim the titles and honours of the great personage approaching, and to clear the crowd out of the way. Thus, when Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over all the land of Egypt, and caused him to ride in his second chariot, heralds ran on before, clearing away the crowds, and crying aloud, "Bow the knee" (Gen. xli. 43). And King Ahasuerus caused heralds to proclaim before Mordecai through the streets of Shushan, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour" (Esther vi. 9).

When Mr. W. H. Russell—then the *Times'* special correspondent in India—was on his way to visit the Rajah of Puttiala (who had invited him to his capital city), the rajah, to receive him with honour, came out some distance to meet him. After they had met and



PREPARING THE WAY.

gone through the ceremonies and courtesies usual on such occasions, the cavalcade set out on its return to the city ; and "as we moved on," he says, "the trumpets fan-

fared, the drums rattled, the morris-dancers leaped and tumbled, the horses neighed, and just in front of the elephants [on which the rajah and his guests were riding] the men with gold and silver badges and sticks, and the heralds with blazons, in loud voices shouted out the names and honours and titles of the rajah in chorus, and invoked blessings on him whom the king delighted to honour."

In India, all great men and princes have heralds, who run on before them in cities and along the highways, and whose business it is to shout out the style, titles, and exploits of their masters, and to open a way for their passage through the crowd. And what a remarkable scene was that in which the Jewish multitude conducted the despised Teacher of Nazareth to Jerusalem, as in a royal procession, spreading their garments and palm-branches in his path, and shouting before him, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!" It was a spontaneous burst of homage, rendered to Him who was habitually "meek and lowly in heart," and therefore totally unlike that studied pomp and ambitious show with which the principal religious teachers among the Hindus surround themselves in public. "The great gooroos," says Dubois, "never appear in public without the utmost degree of pomp; but it is when they proceed on a visitation of their district that they are seen surrounded with their whole splendour." They commonly ride on an elephant, or in a splendid palanquin; sometimes they are attended

by a guard of both cavalry and infantry. Several bands of music go before them, playing on all kinds of native musical instruments. Flags adorned with pictures of the gods wave around them; and some of their officers go before, singing odes in their praise, and admonishing the people to be ready to show to the mighty gooroo the honour and reverence that are due to him. In many places, triumphal arches made of boughs of trees are erected over the road along which he is to pass, and new cloths are spread in his path, and incense and other perfumes are burned before him. What a contrast to the quiet and unostentatious journeys of the Great Religious Teacher during his earthly course! but, as he himself declared, he "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

As an instance of the way in which these heralds in India perform that part of their duty which consists in announcing the honours and titles of their master, we may quote the following case as described by Mr. Forbes. It refers to a visit paid by Futty Singh, a Mahratta chieftain, to the encampment of some British officers, for the purpose of witnessing certain experiments with artillery. He arrived on his state elephant with a large retinue; but as the field-pieces were situated on an eminence which his elephant could not ascend, he was obliged to alight and proceed on foot, as no palanquin happened to be at hand. This conduct on his part caused no little astonishment to his attendants, who viewed it as derogatory to his dignity thus to set foot

on the bare ground. Upon his advancing, the chobdars, or heralds, proclaimed his titles in the usual hyperbolical style; and although really a very insignificant-looking man, he forthwith became "the destroyer of nations! the leveller of mountains! and the exhauster of the ocean!" After commanding every inferior mortal to make way for this exalted prince, the heralds cried aloud to the animal creation: "Retire, ye serpents! fly, ye locusts! approach not, guanas, lizards, and reptiles, while your lord and master condescends to set his foot on the earth!"





XXXVI.

Salutations.

THE people of Eastern countries are generally very ceremonious in their salutations. So early as the time of Abraham we have evidence, in the circumstances connected with the purchase of the cave of Machpelah, of a high state of refinement in manners and intercourse. When the patriarch, on a certain occasion, saw three strangers approaching his tent, he not only hastened to offer them his hospitality, but did so in the most respectful manner, by bowing "himself toward the ground" as he drew near (Gen. xviii. 2).

The Hindus, as a people, are in like manner particularly studious of the forms of etiquette, and at the same time are remarkably sensitive to honourable notice and polite attentions from those they esteem. This trait of their character reveals itself in a proverb which they have, to the effect that "he only is dead whose name is not mentioned with respect."

Lord Hastings mentions that during his governor-generalship a chief of the name of Gundshaum Singh was introduced at the durbar, and presented his "nuzzur" on the flat of the blade of his sword. Lord Hastings touched both the mohurs and the sword, when the chief kissed the sword, and swore by it he would be ready to obey the governor-general's call, with as many men as he could influence, whenever he might be summoned to the field. He was a fine, sturdy-looking fellow; but as soon as he got out of the room he cried in recounting to those around him the kindness with which he had been addressed by Lord Hastings. A native prince, whom, on another occasion, Lord Hastings had gratified by some public mark of attention, undertook a tedious palanquin journey of 400 miles and as many back to visit the governor-general, being induced to do so by the honourable notice which had been shown him three years before.

When a Hindu desires to express to one who is greatly his superior the highest possible respect, he performs before him the *sashtangam*, or prostration of the eight members, throwing himself flat upon the ground, and then stretching out his arms over his head. This, the profoundest mark of reverence, is used towards persons of the highest rank or sacredness, such as kings, religious teachers, and other exalted personages. Sometimes it is offered by a son to his father, and by a younger to an elder brother after long absence; and it may also be performed by the other castes to the Brahmans.

The Scriptures present us with a variety of instances of the use of the same expression of profound reverence. When Jacob went to meet his elder brother Esau—that brother whom he had, moreover, deeply injured and offended—we are told that “he bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother” (Gen. xxxiii. 3). In like manner, when Joseph’s brethren appeared before him as the governor of Egypt, they did in fact, as he had foretold by his dreams they should, bow themselves before him to the earth, and that on several occasions. The Shunammite woman bowed herself to the ground at Elisha’s feet when he restored her son to life ; and we read of the same mark of adoration being several times shown to our Lord.

We find more than one instance in the Bible of persons being enjoined to omit offering salutations to any one they happened to meet on their journey. Thus Gehazi, when commissioned by Elisha to go and restore to life the Shunammite’s son, was directed to salute no man by the way ; and our Lord gave the same command to “the seventy” before sending them forth on their mission to preach and to heal. In each of these cases the business in hand was urgent, and therefore it is probable that it was partly, at least, with a view to prevent delay that this prohibition was given.

Salutations in Eastern countries are often tedious in performance, being protracted by the interchange of various empty and trifling compliments. “When two Hindus meet after a short absence,” says Mr. Ward, “the

inferior first attempts to take hold of his superior's feet, which the latter prevents; they then clasp each other in their arms, and move their heads from one shoulder to the other twice, and afterwards ask after each other's welfare. The inferior replies, 'Through your favour I continue well;' 'As you command, all is well.' Or he asks, 'How! Is the house well?' meaning the family."

There are many other forms of salutation among the Hindus, less tedious and elaborate, however, than this. Upon meeting an acquaintance they will, in some places, salute him by raising the right hand to the heart, or by simply stretching out the hand. They use also the "salaam," a ceremony which consists in raising the hand to the forehead. When this salutation is offered to persons of distinction, it will often be repeated thrice; and both hands, after touching the ground, are raised to the forehead. Another mode of salutation is by raising the joined hands to the breast. When still more respect is intended to be paid, both hands are lowered to the feet of the person saluted.

"The other castes," says Dubois, "salute the Brahmans by offering them the *namaskaram*. This salutation consists in joining the hands and elevating them to the forehead, or sometimes over the head. Such a mode of saluting implies great superiority on the part of him to whom it is paid. It is accompanied with these two words, '*Andam arya*'—'Hail, respected lord!' The Brahmans, in return, stretch out their hands half-open, as if they wished to receive something from the person



EASTERN MODE OF SALUTATION.

who pays them homage, and answer with this single word, '*Asirvadam*'—'Benediction.'"

When relatives, amongst the Hindus, have been long

absent, they salute by clinging to one another, by shedding tears of joy, and by chucking each other under the chin. They never touch each other's faces in embracing, however; and it would be considered a monstrous breach of propriety for a man to embrace a woman in public. Even the nearest relatives—such as husband and wife, or mother and son—may not embrace in public.

In respect to the points just referred to, the practice of the Hebrews differed in some particulars from that of the Hindus. They had the same custom of embracing and shedding tears of joy at meeting, but we frequently read in the Scriptures of men kissing one another, which is at variance with the custom of the Hindus. Thus we read that Laban and Esau kissed Jacob; and Jonathan is said to have kissed David. Our Lord reprov'd his entertainer Simon for neglecting to give him the usual kiss upon receiving him; and the elders of Miletus fell on Paul's neck and "kissed" him. We further read of men saluting women in the same way, and that even in public, as when Jacob saluted his cousin Rachel.

In accordance with the notion entertained in the East that woman is the inferior and servant of man, we find in the Scriptures that women approached men with marks of attention and respect, thereby adopting a course just the opposite of what we think to be becoming and proper. When a Hindu, in a palanquin or on horseback, meets on the road one of greatly superior rank to himself, he alights and remains standing until his superior has passed on to some distance; and so when Rebekah

came in sight of Isaac "she lighted off her camel." In like manner, when Abigail saw David "she lighted off her ass," and fell before him on her face, and bowed herself to the ground ; and to show the profound respect which he entertained for the prophet Elisha, Naaman, the Syrian commander-in-chief, lighted down from his chariot to meet Gehazi, the prophet's servant. "Hindu women," says Dubois, "as a mark of respect, turn their backs to the men they hold in estimation ; and they must at least turn their faces aside and cover them well with their veils. When they go out of doors they must keep on their way without noticing goers and comers ; if they meet a man they must hold down their head or avert their countenance. Women are never permitted to sit in the presence of men ; and a married woman is not indulged in this privilege even in the presence of her husband."





XXXVII.

“Vain Repetitions,” and “Long Prayers.”

THE subject of prayer furnishes a remarkable instance of the false notions of himself, and of his position in regard to God, which sin has engendered in man. No ordinary petitioner thinks he does a favour when he presents a request, but quite the contrary ; and yet man believes he lays God under an obligation by praying to him. Supposing man had—which of course he never can have—an independent position in regard to God, even then prayer would be the asking, and not the conferring, of a favour ; and yet with a singular infatuation, which only the moral derangement of sin can explain, man has everywhere treated prayer as an act of merit on his part. This notion will be found running through the devotional practice of all nations. “The heathen,” said our Lord, “think that they shall be heard for their much speaking,” and accordingly made use of endless repetitions. The same belief is still more markedly displayed and denounced

in the case of the scribes, who thought the making of "long prayers" an excuse for devouring "widows' houses;" and that their ancestors acted in the same way, and hoped to counterbalance their moral delinquency by multiplying their devotions, appears evident from the declaration of Jehovah by his prophet: "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Isa. i. 15).

The Hindus, and especially the Brahmans, cherish similar notions in regard to the merit and efficacy of prayer. The priests of Baal, in their contest with Elijah, called on the name of their god from morning till noon; and the Hindus consider it an act of special efficacy to repeat continuously the name of their guardian deity. The Brahmans have certain forms of prayer, or "muntras," so potent, according to their belief, as to be able to enchain the gods themselves, who, they assert, cannot disobey their awful summons; and accordingly they have recourse to these muntras much in the same way that necromancers and magicians used to have recourse to their professedly irresistible spells and incantations. The priests, as might be expected, turn the power which they assume to possess by means of the muntras to their own purposes; and a Sanscrit strophe, which Dubois remarks is ever in the mouth of the Brahmans, sets this claim forth with logical strictness and regularity. It is thus translated:—"All the universe is under the power of the gods; the gods are subject to the power of the mun-

tras ; the muntras are under the power of the Brahmans : the Brahmans are therefore our gods."

Of all the muntras, the gayatri is the most ancient and powerful. Its potency is such that it is believed to make even the gods tremble ; and no other is thought so effectual for cancelling sin. When a Brahman intends to recite it, he prepares himself by prayer and profound meditation ; and takes the utmost care that no Sudra, nor any of the profane, shall hear a syllable of it ; whilst to reveal it to a foreigner or any profane person would be an act of horrible sacrilege. The following are the words of this muntra, as given by Dubois :—

" Tat Savita varenyam swarga devaya
Dimahi diyo yo no prachodayet."

Savita is one of the names given to the sun, and it is therefore thought to be addressed to him ; but the Brahmans themselves are very much in the dark as to its real meaning, and Dubois says, " I have never met with any one who could give me a tolerable explication of it." The same author remarks further : " Other persons beside Brahmans do not scruple to pronounce the muntras ; as physicians, who would be considered ignorant and unworthy of public confidence if they were unacquainted with muntras suited to each particular disease, as regularly as with the medicines they apply for cure, which latter is considered to arise as much from the muntras as from the medicines. European physicians in India are held in discredit, in part because they administer medicine without any accompanying muntra." Surely there is a

truth running through all this, which, enlightened as we are, we in practice would do well to regard.

As an illustration of the “vain repetitions” mentioned by our Lord as made use of by the heathen, the practice of the Hindus may be referred to, who think that their merit in prayer is in proportion to the number of times they repeat the name of their guardian deity ; so that they may often be seen counting the number of these repetitions on the beads of their necklace as they walk along. Nor is it a necessary condition for procuring this merit that the repetition should be effected by their own utterance ; if they can get the name repeated, the performance is set down to their account. Hindus, therefore, often keep a parrot, which they teach industriously for many months together, and sometimes for more than a year, before the lesson is learned, to repeat the name of the particular god they worship. “This ceremony,” says Mr. Ward, “is supposed to bring great blessings both on the teacher and the scholar,—the parrot obtains heaven, and so does its master. Numbers of Hindus, particularly in the morning and evening, may be seen in the streets, walking about with parrots in their hands, and repeating aloud to them ‘Radha-Krishnu, Radha-Krishnu, Krishnu, Krishnu, Radha, Radha ;’ or ‘Shivu-Doorga,’ or ‘Kalee-turan.’”

For the highest development of this perpetual and vicarious devotion, we must look, however, to a country lying to the north of India—Thibet, where they have invented *praying-machines* ; not only in the shape of

prayer wheels or cylinders, to be turned by the hand of the votary, but even in some cases by water-power. We may be shocked at the false notions and the besotted ignorance which such a practice implies, but let us not forget that he is a more pernicious *praying-machine* who, in a Christian land, appears before the true God with mere words, unaccompanied by intelligent thought and sincere desire. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

The Hindus are equally chargeable with "long prayers" as with "vain repetitions;" and the *sundhya*, or daily prayers, of the Brahmans, take up a space of between two and three hours in their performance. Mrs. Belnos, a lady who made these prayers the object of her special inquiry whilst in India, and who has graphically illustrated the subject with her pencil as well as with her pen, gives the following account of the daily devotions of the Brahmans:—

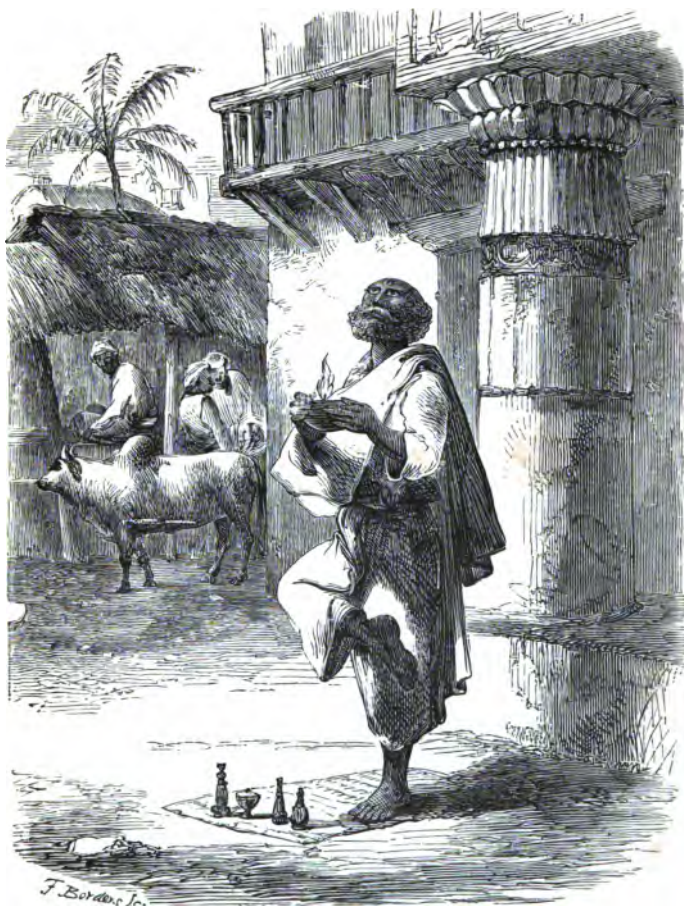
"It is habitual with the natives all over India to rise with the first dawn of day. The Brahman sits upon his charpoy (light bamboo bedstead), or on a mat on the ground, and, joining his hands, repeats the following prayer to the gooroo (high priest or spiritual guide), who is considered by the Hindus to be invested with the power of a deity, and to have sprung from the gods. To him the Brahman offers up his first morning orisons. The words are contained in the Poorans, and the following is a literal translation of the original Sanscrit:—'I glorify thee, Benign, who rests upon a serpent, from whose

navel the lotus springs ; god of gods ; the supporter of the universe ; beautiful as the azure of the sky ; cloud-like in colour ; elegant in form. The husband of Luxshmee, lotus-eyed, worthy the contemplation of sages ! Vishnu, the preserver and destroyer of the world ! The only lord of the universe ! I glorify him who is to be always contemplated, the remover of all stains, the granter of all desires, the essence of all holy shrines ; who is praised by Siva and by Brahma ; the universal refuge, the assuager of the pain of his servants, the protector of those who bend before him, the bark to bear us over the ocean of the world. I praise thy lotus-feet, O mighty Male.'

"Having terminated his prayer to the gooroo, he quits his place of repose, and filling a brass vessel called julp-tree, he commences by washing his face and rubbing his teeth, praying at the same time that all impurity may thus be cleansed away from him, and he be made as pure within as without. Then proceeding to the river-side, he enters the Ganges knee-deep, sprinkles a little water, by a quick jerk of the right hand, over his head ; and holding some in the half-closed palm of the same hand, addresses a prayer to the great deity Bhagwau. This said, he plunges several times in the Ganges ; and while he rubs each member in the sacred stream, chants a great number of verses in praise of Gunga. The purification by frequent immersion in the sacred stream completed, the Brahman changes his dhotee (wrapping garment) for a dry, coloured one—either red, yellow, or orange, these

being the colours principally worn by Hindus of the Upper Provinces. He then spreads a small mat on a dry spot on the banks of the river, and seats himself cross-legged, the right lying on the left. He retains that posture immovably for two or three hours together, whilst he performs with his hands and fingers all the ceremonies of the morning devotions to the various deities, commencing with the principal one, as Mahadeo, Vishnu, &c. The various figures which are executed with the hands and fingers are performed with wonderful rapidity, the votary repeating at the same time the name of each figure. The following are a few of the names of these figures :—Soon Mookum, Ek Mookum, Do Mookum, Teen Mookum, Choutah Mookum. As far as the first twenty-one moodras there is no change in the position of the body, but only of the arms, hands, and fingers ; and no other meaning is attached to these figures than that they are pleasing to the gods.

"The Brahman next proceeds to the pranayama, taking an inward view of Vishnu Bhagwau and Mahadeo ; the first the preserver of the universe, and the latter the destroyer of all. This ceremony is performed thus :—First, he presses in the right nostril with the fourth finger of the left hand, repeating the name of each deity, and counting them nine times over on the joints of the fingers of his right hand, with great rapidity, half-closing the eyes the while, and drawing in his breath ; then gently pressing in the left nostril with his thumb, he breathes out, repeating the same name as many times



PRAYING IN THE STREETS.

over ; then releasing the right nostril, and still pressing in the left with the thumb, he terminates the prana-yama. The names are not uttered aloud, but merely by

a movement of the lips. When the pranayama is concluded, the Brahman takes up water in the palm of his left hand, and touching it with the tips of the fingers of his right hand, he sprinkles it over his head. Then dropping his right hand, and taking up fresh water, he presents it to the right nostril, drawing in his breath; he then pours out the water on the left side of the palm. After this, he takes up the urgha (a long shallow vessel of copper) filled with water, over which he strews yellow and red sandal, raw rice, and a few flowers; then rising from his seat, he holds the urgha with both hands, passing one end of the janeo (the Brahmanic thread) over the thumb and the urgha, and repeats the following prayer to the sun: 'O sun of a thousand rays! most glorious lord of the world! have mercy upon me! I am thy servant, accept my offering of water, O lord of the day!' Here the Brahman pours out the contents of the urgha. He then with his hands and fingers forms a hole between the middle fingers; and holding his hands in this position up to his left eye, he takes a survey of the sun. After this he resumes his seat in the same attitude as before, and then proceeds to the gayatri-jup. This prayer is secret, and may not be divulged to any but a Brahman, and must be whispered only in his ear. The figures are performed with the right hand, whilst the left hangs listlessly over his right foot, and they must be cautiously concealed from all prying eyes by a red-cloth bag drawn over the hand and hanging down on all sides. This bag is called gumookhi, and is generally

made of red broad-cloth. The Hindus usually content themselves with throwing part of their wrapping-cloth over the hand, which serves the same purpose as the bag. After the secret prayer, he makes the sign of the eight moodras in the gayatri-jup. This concludes the ceremony performed by the Brahmans daily in their sacred stream or on its banks. The Hindus generally, however, do not adhere strictly to every part of the ceremonies enjoined by the Poorans and Shasters, but merely repeat the first few moodras; and then, sprinkling some water on their heads, go home; indeed, the working classes and men of business have not time to attend to all the ceremonies prescribed."

All these "long prayers" just described are performed openly on the bank of the river; indeed, it is the custom for the Brahmans and religious ascetics to make a public display of their devout practices. Herein they resemble the scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's day, who were charged by him with doing all their works to be seen of men, and loved to pray in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets. "To be seen of men," is one of the principal motives which induce the Hindu Yogis, Fakirs, and other ascetics, to make the revolting exhibitions which are to be witnessed on all hands in India. Why, for instance, should this ascetic have held his arms above his head until they have become rigid and inflexible? Why should he have let his nails grow till they have become like horns, and his hair to have become so foul and matted that altogether he looks more like a wild

beast than a human being?—why but because he wished "to be seen, and to obtain glory of men." And, as the Saviour added in regard to the Jewish hypocrites, he has his reward; for wherever he appears, women of distinction contend with each other for the honour of feeding this, as they believe, most holy person.





XXXVIII.

Sun-Stroke and Moon-Blindness.

IN many Eastern countries the moon exerts a most marked and powerful influence on the human body. The natives of India are firm believers in the reality of this influence; and Indian physicians, both European and native, are well aware of the powerful operation of the moon on the human frame, when in certain states and conditions. This operation is specially marked in the case of fevers, and at times with so much clearness, that the day on which the paroxysm of an intermittent fever will return can be confidently anticipated.

The Psalmist makes reference to this injurious influence of the moon, whilst assuring those whom the Lord Jehovah keeps, of their safety under his protection: "The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night" (Ps. cxxi. 5, 6).

There is in India a peculiar kind of blindness called

moon-blindness, arising, it is believed, from a person's incautiously exposing himself to the moon's influence during sleep. Those persons who are affected in this singular way cannot see at night by moonlight, although they have the perfect use of their eyes in the sun's light by day. Sometimes an Englishman, when travelling by night in India, will be delayed in his journey by moonlight owing to one or more of his palanquin-bearers being moon-blind; and the engraving represents an incident that may frequently be witnessed whilst travelling in that country.

More potent, however, than the moon's influence, is the sun's agency and power in such countries as Palestine and India. "The sun shall not smite thee by day," says the Psalmist; but to comprehend the extent of the protection herein promised, we must borrow a page from Eastern experience. In our cold climate it is difficult to realize the intensity and fierceness of the sun's heat in such a country as India. During the hot months, the air by day glows with the heat of a fiery oven; and a gust of wind striking on the face, seems like a blast of fire. To expose one's-self at that season to the sun's rays in the heat of the day, is to run the risk of one's life. The air is then like the breath of a furnace; the earth is baked and heated, till it scorches the feet of the natives as they tread upon it; stones and metals are painful to the touch; and the wind stifles with its suffocating heat—whilst every particle of dust it carries, pains and stings the flesh like a spark of



MOON-BLINDNESS.

fire. Underneath the shade, and within doors too, the heat would be all but insupportable to Europeans, during the prevalence of the hot winds, but for the means taken

to mitigate it through *punkahs* and *tatties*. The trying effect of the heat on the constitution of Europeans, may be judged of from the havoc it often plays with parts of the household furniture. Lamps, tumblers, and wine-glasses become so much heated as often to crack and burst ; objects made of metal seem as if they had been placed before a fierce fire ; and wooden furniture feels hot to the touch, and, unless well put together, speedily falls to pieces.

Bishop Heber makes the following entry in his Journal respecting his experience of the heat, even at the period of some months after the hottest season : " Such a sun, thank Heaven ! never glared on England as this day (Sept. 10) rained its lightnings on Chunar. I thought myself fortunate in getting housed before ten o'clock, and before the worst came on ; but it was still enough to sicken one. There was little wind, and what there was was hot ; and the reflection and glare of the light gray rock, the light gray castle, the light gray sand, the white houses, and the hot, bright river, were about as much as I could endure. Yet, I trust it is not a little that overpowers me."

English travellers who have ventured to continue their journey in the middle of the day in the hot season have, in many instances, paid the forfeit of their rashness with their lives, although they had no personal exertion to make, but had merely to lie beneath the shade of their palanquins, whilst their bearers carried them along.

Now Palestine, the south of which has the same latitude as some parts of Northern India, is subjected to little less intense heats than those just referred to, and hence the frequent references in the Bible to the overpowering effects of the sun's influence, and the unspeakably grateful relief of a timely shade. When Lot speaks of having received the travellers under the "shadow of his roof" in Sodom, he alludes to by no means the least of the advantages which such hospitality afforded to the Eastern traveller. The blessings that should be derived from Christ and his Church are presented under the image of a shadow from the heat, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;" and the Royal Poet represents the Church as saying, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste" (Song of Sol. ii. 3).

The labourers in their murmurs against the householder, because he paid them all alike, remind him of their having borne "the heat of the day;" and Job speaks of the servant as earnestly "desiring the shadow." During the hot season in India there is a general lull and pause in the heat of the day. The beasts of prey keep close in their dens; the birds become mute, and shelter themselves beneath the foliage of the trees; and the European traveller may be seen encamped, and sitting at his tent-door, as Abraham was doing "in the heat of the day," when the three angels visited him in the plain of Mamre.

When Jonah's gourd perished, and a hot wind began

to blow, and the sun to beat upon his head, it was no alight suffering that he must have endured; although, at the same time, it could form no excuse for the petulant discontent which led him to say, "It is better for me to die than to live."

So intense is the heat in India during the hot months, that the natives themselves occasionally perish through *coup de soleil*, or sun-stroke, by which, as we read, the son of the Shunammite was cut off, although subsequently restored to life by the prophet Elisha. Europeans in India, as might be expected, fall still oftener victims to sun-stroke than do the natives; and our soldiers, especially when engaged in campaigning, frequently perish from this cause. An officer records in his journal an instance of a major and twenty-three soldiers of one regiment perishing from sun-stroke in a single day. During the suppression of the Sepoy mutiny, many hundreds of our soldiers fell victims to sun-stroke; and one small body of troops lost five or six men daily at one period from the same cause.

Bishop Heber mentions that on one occasion, in order to reach the town of Dacca, in time to preach on the following day, which was Sunday, he left his pinnace and sailed up the river in an open boat, sheltered by a straw umbrella; but his shins happening to remain exposed to the sun's rays during part of the voyage, the consequence was that they looked as if they had been scorched by an intense fire, and he continued lame for some days afterwards.

If the sun's rays in India exert such a scorching effect on the unprotected skin, we may imagine how destructive and overwhelming its fierce glare must be to any unguarded eye that might venture to look on its burning splendour. This exposure certain Hindus attempt, however, as an act of religious devotion, and speedily, of course, lose the power of vision ; but whilst engaged in the penance, which they take care to perform as publicly as possible, they are witnessed and applauded by excited and admiring crowds.

The foregoing fact may impressively remind us how impossible it would be for any mortal eye to gaze on the unclouded splendour of the Divine Being, who is often in the Scriptures likened to a sun ; and how, especially at the last Great Day, every sinner not sheltered beneath the covert of Christ's divine and all-sufficient atonement will then shrink abashed and overwhelmed when he comes, in his glory, to seat himself on the throne of judgment !





XXXIX.

Lamentations, and "Mourning Women."

ACCUSTOMED as we are to control our feelings, and to repress any very decided expression of them in public, we can scarcely help regarding the vehement manifestations of joy and grief in which the people of Eastern countries indulge as other than extravagant and affected. In this cold Northern clime it is our habit to be so reserved and so shy of outward manifestations of feeling, that we are apt to suspect the sincerity of any marked demonstration either of joy or sorrow. It is not natural to us to publish our emotions; but it is both natural and customary for the inhabitants of the sunny East and South to give loud and violent expression to their emotions of joy and sorrow. If we think their vehemence in this respect to be extravagant and pretended, they, on the other hand, look on such reserve as we are wont to evince as stupid and heartless.

In the Scriptures we find frequent illustrations of this

Eastern characteristic, of giving vehement expression to feeling; but at present we confine our attention to expressions of sorrow and mourning. In the presence of calamity and loss, the people of Eastern countries give themselves up to uncontrollable grief, and they rather urge than repress the outburst of their sorrow. Not only do they at such seasons give vent to bitter weeping and wailing, but they rend their garments, cast ashes and dust on their heads, roll themselves among the ashes, tear their hair and their flesh, and bruise and cut themselves in the paroxysm of their grief and distraction.

We find allusions made in the Bible to most of these manifestations of grief. Although it is at variance with our notions of manliness for men freely to give way to tears, yet we often read in the Scriptures of this being done, and that too on one occasion by a band of rough soldiers and outlaws. When David and his six hundred men of war returned to Ziklag, after being refused permission to serve against Israel in the army of the Philistines, they found their city burned to the ground, and their wives and children, their property, and all that they had, carried off, and not a remnant left. This was a terrible calamity, truly; but how did these warriors and their chief behave under the circumstances? We are told: "Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep" (1 Sam. xxx. 4). Job, in describing the sadness of his lot, says, "My face is foul with weeping" (Job xvi. 16); and there is a variety of other

instances in the Bible of men expressing their grief in this way.

When Joseph's blood-stained garment was shown to Jacob, "he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth," as an expression of his grief (Gen. xxxvii. 34). We read also of sitting on the ground, of casting dust on the head, of rolling in ashes, and of cutting off the hair, as further tokens of deep sorrow. The Israelites were commanded not to cut themselves for the dead (Deut. xiv. 1), although, from a reference in the Book of Jeremiah, it would seem that the custom of tearing the flesh subsequently prevailed, notwithstanding the prohibition.

But in addition to these methods of exhibiting their grief, the Israelites made use of hired mourners to assist in publishing their sorrow. Solomon speaks in Ecclesiastes of the mourners who "go about the streets," to lament for the dead (Eccles. xii. 5). These mourners were probably women, since we afterwards read expressly of "mourning women," who were summoned to take up a wailing on account of the prevailing calamities, and to assist in promoting the grief of the afflicted Jews. The prophet Amos speaks of their calling those "skilful of lamentation to wailing" (Amos v. 16); and in later times instruments were made use of to aid in the celebration. When our Lord went into the house of the ruler "whose daughter had just died," he found "minstrels and the people making a noise" (Matt. ix. 23); and these were probably hired mourners, who had been summoned for the occasion. The women engaged at such

seasons were very often, perhaps generally, widows; and mention is made of such a gathering of widows for lamentation, when Peter was summoned to Joppa, upon the death of Dorcas.

When any heavy calamity or loss falls upon the Hindus, it is their custom to give unrestrained and violent expression to their grief. In the first outburst of sorrow the women may be seen tearing their hair, beating their foreheads, and sometimes bruising themselves with the object they can first lay their hands upon; and their lamentations may frequently be heard a long way off.

The prophet Joel calls upon Zion in the midst of her calamities to "lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth;" and the scene to which the prophet here alludes is one to which India presents many sad counterparts. There are few more desolate and hapless conditions than that of the young Hindu widow. When she first enters on her painful lot, she gives way to expressions of unmeasured sorrow; and the manifestation of her grief, great as is in truth the actual occasion for sorrow, generally exceeds the adequate representation of her real feelings. Custom requires, however, that she should make a show of vehement grief, as well for her own sake as out of regard for her deceased husband, and she would be thought wanting in proper feeling, on the occasion, were she quietly to express her grief. Dubois mentions that he was, on one occasion, appealed to by the relatives of a young Hindu widow, "whose stupidity was so gross," they alleged,

"that at her husband's death she had not a word to say, but only wept!"

The same author mentions, that as soon as her husband dies, the widow throws herself upon his body and embraces it with loud shrieks. This she continues to do until the attendant relatives think that she has acquitted herself sufficiently of this first part of the demonstration, and accordingly attempt to remove her; but she resists their efforts, until she finds herself overpowered, when she yields, and contents herself with rolling on the ground, like one bereft of reason, tearing off her hair in handfuls, beating her breast, and giving other proofs of the sincerity of her sorrow. After exhibiting these first evidences of her despair, she approaches the body of her husband, and addresses it in a style somewhat exceeding the limits of real affection, demanding—"Why hast thou forsaken me? What evil have I done that thou hast left me at this untimely age? Had I not always for thee the fondness of a faithful wife? Did I not neatly serve up thy rice? Did I not devote myself to provide thee good eating?" "Such pathetic appeals as these," adds Dubois, "she utters in a sad and lamentable tone; and at each demand she pauses to allow scope to her grief, which then breaks forth in violent screams, and with torrents of blasphemies against those who have deprived her of her protector. She continues to apostrophize her husband in this manner, till her wearied lungs can no longer afford her the means of making her affliction audible, or till her exhausted eloquence has spent all its



MOURNING WOMEN.

stores. It is then time to withdraw, that she may obtain some repose, and meditate on some new harangue to be addressed to the dead body, whilst it is being pre-

pared for the obsequies. It would be highly discreditable to a woman, under such circumstances, to forbear giving violent expression to her sorrow; and the more noisy she is in its manifestation, the more is she esteemed for intelligence and sentiment. When these expressions of grief are concluded, the attendant women and relatives are accustomed to echo her doleful exclamations and apostrophes, and are at the same time careful observers of her whole behaviour, in order that, should anything strike them as new, either in her words or gestures, they may treasure it up for use, when they themselves come to be placed in similar circumstances."

Women are often hired in India, on these and on other mournful occasions, to assist in the ceremony of mourning. As soon as these weeping hirelings are summoned, they appear with hair dishevelled, and forthwith proceed to wail and weep, and to strike their bare breasts with both hands; whilst every now and then they apostrophize the dead, and mingle gentle upbraidings for his cruelty in forsaking his friends, with eulogies on his character and virtues.

Such women may also be hired to "go about the streets" mourning; and these, doubtless, correspond to the mourners referred to by the Royal Preacher, when he speaks of the "mourners that go about the streets."

The conduct of the poor Hindu women when they lose an infant child, presents to us an affecting picture of that bitter mourning of the women of Ramah for their children, refusing to "be comforted because they were

not." Upon the death of her infant, the poor Hindu mother sets up a loud lamentation, resembling a chant, in which she makes use of the following words: "Oh, my child; who has taken thee, my child? I nourished thee, and reared thee; now where art thou gone? Take me with thee; oh, my child, my child! Thou playedst around me like a golden top, my child. The like of thy face I have never seen, my child, my child! Let fire devour the eyes of men (supposing that the evil eye—in the fatal effects of which the Hindus are firm believers—has been the cause of his death). The infant continually called me *mah*, *mah* (mother, mother). The infant used to say, 'Mah, let me sit upon thy lap,'—my child! His father never stayed at home, since he was born, my child, my child! but bore him continually in his arms for men to admire. What is become now of that admiration? Evil befall the eyes of men. Oh, my life! say *mah* again, my child, my child! My arms and my lap feel empty; who will fill them? My eye has become darkened, now that thou hast vanished from before it."

After having lamented thus for some time, a female neighbour passing approaches her, and stopping her mouth with the end of her garment, tries to comfort her, saying: "Why do you weep thus? Why do you destroy your health? If the child had been designed to be yours, it would not have died: this is the end of children. They come not to bring pleasure, but to bestow sorrow upon us. What did the mother of Ram

Purdas do? Did she get her son back? If crying would do, why cry alone? we would come—eight or ten of us—and assist you. Perhaps in your former life you stole the child of your neighbour, and now yours in return is taken from you. You have set the highest value upon him, and therefore you weep; but if he had been worth anything, he would not have left you. Go into your house and comfort those that are left. He was not your son, but your enemy; he has brought sorrow upon you. You have neglected no means to preserve his life, why then mourn? Go and repeat the name of your guardian deity, that will do you good hereafter; why weep for him?"

Well may the poor Hindu mother say, in the words of the patriarch of old, "miserable comforters are ye all!" For instead of ministering comfort, these words only serve the more to heighten her grief, which she gives expression to by knocking her head upon the earth, by beating her breast, tearing her hair, or rolling like a maniac on the ground, until she is at length forcibly carried to her house.

What a blessed contrast to this sad picture is afforded by those bereaved parents who are simple and sincere believers in Him who hath brought life and immortality to light by his gospel; for whilst they mourn their loss, they also delight to think of the "Good Shepherd" as only having early taken the little lambs to shelter them in the heavenly fold, and so the more frequently and surely to lead their own thoughts to those sweet fields,


whither he is gathering all his once wandering sheep, that he may lead them to the green pastures and by the still waters of the heavenly country, whence they shall go out no more for ever, but follow him whithersoever he goeth.





XL.

A Khelaut, or Dress of Honour.

 HE Marquis of Hastings has the following entry in the private journal which he kept while Governor-General of India:—"I held a durbar (at Benares) which was attended by all the principal natives. First, the Rajah of Benares was introduced anew. As he presented his nuzzur, I touched it without rising from my chair, and I then requested him to accept a khelaut. He retired to be clothed in the dress; and upon being invested, he was brought forward, when I put round his neck a string of pearls, and delivered to him a scimitar and shield."

This ceremonial explains the way in which an Indian prince or ruler confers a mark of honour; and Lord Hastings was acting, in the foregoing account, in his capacity as an Indian ruler in presenting to the Rajah of Benares a khelaut, or dress of honour. This dress usually consists of a robe, turban, necklace, shield, and sword; and the prince himself presents part of the dress



PRESENTING A DRESS OF HONOUR.

—generally the turban and necklace—when the person whom he honours is of high rank, but in other cases some of his officers present the khelaut.

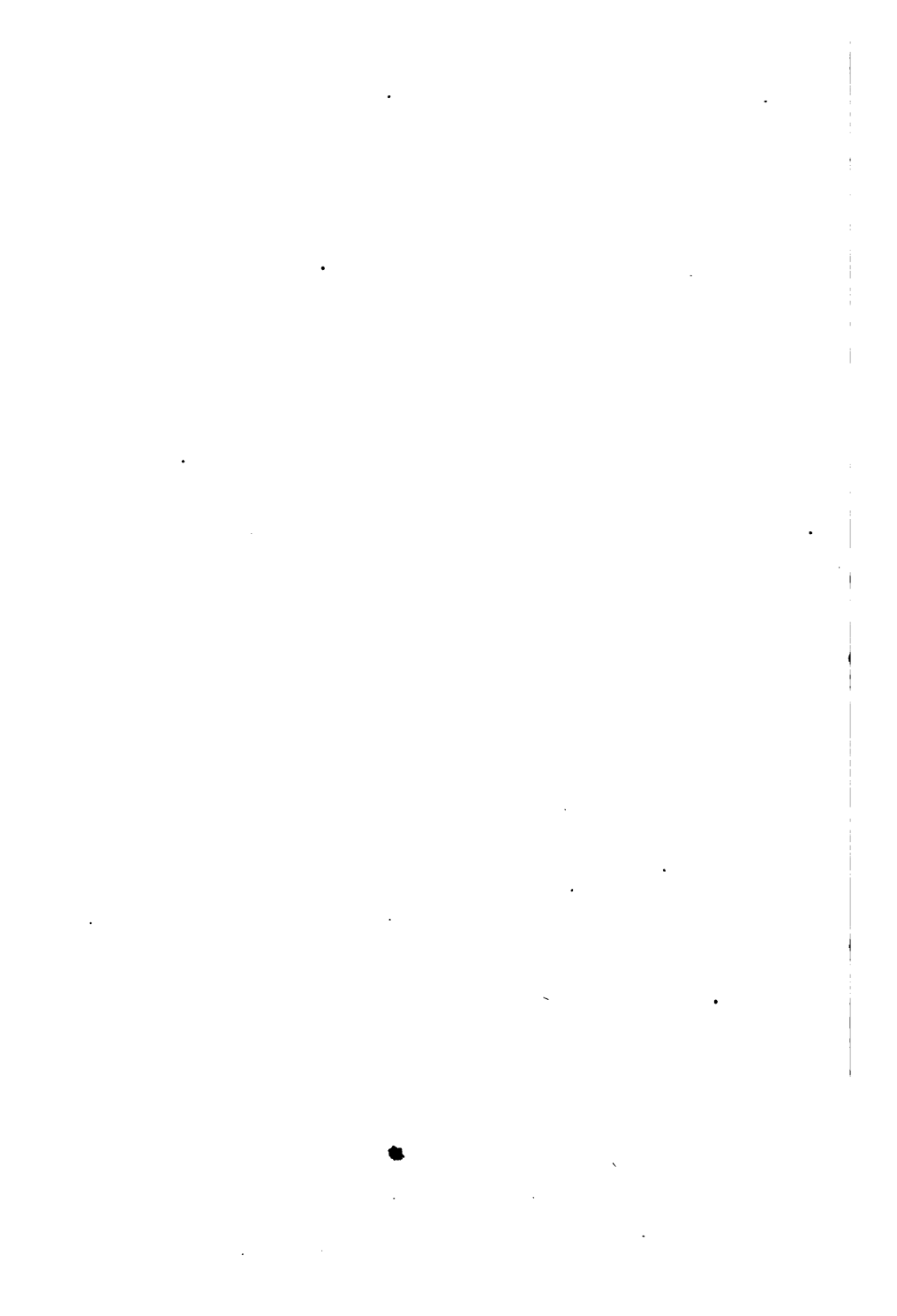
When Lord Valentia paid a visit to the Nawab of Oude, he was seated along with the other English gentlemen at the nawab's right hand, whilst the brothers and sons of the nawab were seated on the left, and the courtiers and attendants stood, the former in front, and the latter behind the musnud or throne on which the prince was seated. As soon as the nawab had taken his place, his brothers each presented him with a nuzzur, which he accepted, and embraced them, and then put on their heads turbans ornamented with jewels in front. After this the chief eunuch presented them with robes, and then again the nawab himself bestowed on them shawls, belts, swords, and shields; and they in turn again offered a nuzzur and salaam to the nawab, and retired to their seats. After the nawab's brothers came his sons, who went through the same ceremonial. These were followed by other persons attending the durbar, from some of whom the nawab himself took the nuzzur, and embraced them, and put on their heads a jewelled turban; in other instances, the nuzzur was taken by one of the nawab's attendants, and nothing was offered in return.

The Scriptures contain several allusions to this custom. After Pharaoh had heard from Joseph the interpretation of his dreams, it is said that "Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck" (Gen. xli. 42). Again, when Mordecai came before King Ahasuerus, after his enemy

Haman, by the king's order, had been hanged, we are told that "the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai.....And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple" (Esther viii. 2, 15). So, too, Daniel had a khelaut bestowed on him by order of Belshazzar, after he had interpreted the mysterious writing on the wall. "Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck" (Dan. v. 29).

In the Book of the Revelation it is said, respecting the martyrs, that "white robes were given unto every one of them" (Rev. vi. 11); and not only so, but for the sake of Him who once submitted to be derisively arrayed with a purple robe and a crown of thorns, shall the whole company of his redeemed people yet stand before his throne, in his own royal mansion above, clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands. May no reader of these illustrations fail at last, through his own fault, of obtaining this "dress of honour" and this palm of victory!





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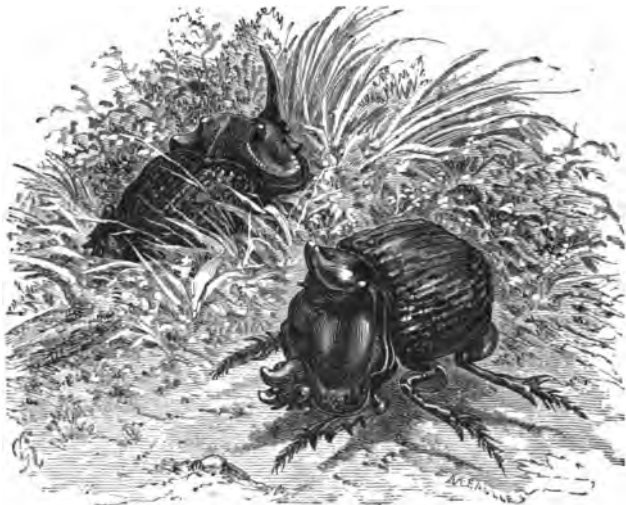
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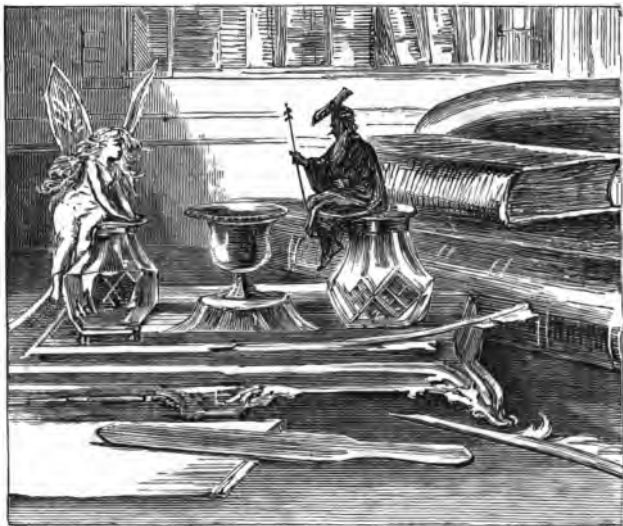
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